

Disability NOW

£1.40 SEPTEMBER 1996

The award
winning
newspaper
for everyone
with an interest
in disability

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Disabled rights are slowly going places

A disabled woman and her husband have won their legal battle against a shipping company which stopped her taking a cruise she had already paid for.

Wheelchair user June Tomlinson and husband Arthur, 58, from Nottingham, won £1,266 compensation from shipping firm Cunard at Nottingham County Court in August.

When the couple booked the luxury ten-day cruise, they told Cunard about her disability. She even had a signed medical certificate from her GP saying she was fit for sea travel.

But when they joined the Cunard Princess liner in Malaga, staff declared Mrs Tomlinson unfit to travel because the 11-hour journey to join the ship had made her legs swell.

The couple were insured for the holiday, but broker Sure-

travel Insurance said Mrs Tomlinson could not claim because nothing had affected her health to prevent her taking the trip.

Judge Keith Matthewman QC said Cunard had tried to use its contractual power and muscle to prevent an honest and decent woman, who happened to be in a wheelchair, from getting what she was entitled to.

Mrs Tomlinson said: "It was embarrassing and distressing. The apology means a lot. It's a shame it came so late."

Cunard said it would do all it could to make sure the problem didn't happen again.

Meanwhile, Martin Fortune, a wheelchair user with cerebral

palsy, forced Air India to back down after it removed him from a flight.

Martin, 26, was banned from the flight to Bombay from Heathrow Airport, unless he travelled with a carer.

Martin was furious as his travel agent had told the company about his disability. He sat it out at the airport and the airline eventually put him on a flight 12 hours later.

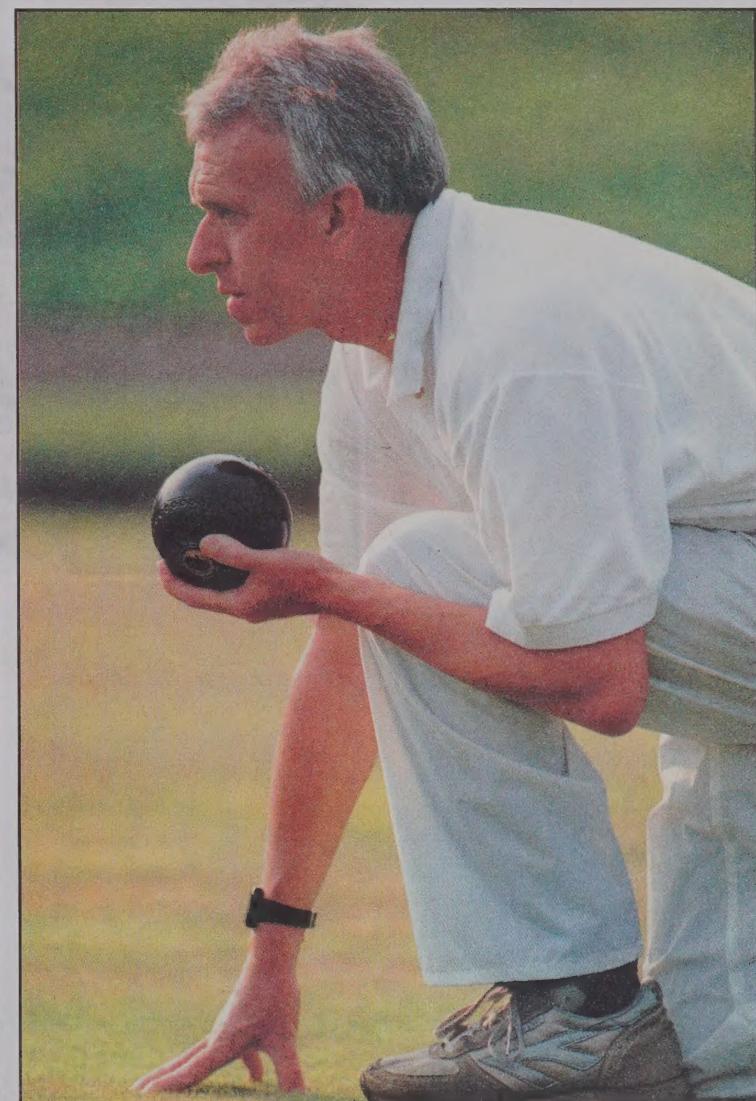
He is now carrying out voluntary work for the charity Action on Disability and Development.

"The way I have been treated is disgusting," he said.

An Air India spokesman said the airline failed to inform Martin that he should be escorted because of his disability.

Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation director, Bert Massie, said: "These victories are important.

"But disabled people should not have to battle like this. Far better that companies review their policies."



Blind bowler John Sparks has been banned from a sighted bowling contest after elderly bowls club members complained of discrimination. The Bleach Green Veterans' Club said John, 48, could not compete, because they could not take part in visually impaired tournaments. They also said that he was too slow.

John, from Gateshead, beat club president Les Archer, 84, in the same competition last year and said its members were being unfair: "I don't think that they want disabled people taking part in their competition. They are living in the past." NEWCASTLE EVENING CHRONICLE

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An elderly couple who have been married for 44 years have been split up and may lose their home to pay for care.

Both John Welham and his wife Edna, who are 68, had strokes in 1994.

They had already spent their



Edna Welham

savings on home care before Nottinghamshire Social Services stepped in to meet costs.

Now the independent agency providing their care is refusing to care for the couple together and the pair are having their needs reassessed.

John Welham has already been taken into a care home and wife Edna may follow at the end of August.

If she does, they will have to sell their house in Barnstone to pay for care. But social services have not confirmed that they can stay in the same home.

Daughter Eunice Rose is upset at her parents' predicament.

"Even if they cannot both be

cared for in their own house they should at least be in the same care home," she said.

An agency has now offered to care for the couple at home.

A spokesperson for social services said it was considering this and other options.



John Welham

Take Control

Sandra Sherlock has!



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Sandra is thrilled about her new found motoring freedom and is already encouraging others to follow her example: "A lot of my friends were waiting to see how I got on", said a delighted Sandra, "and now that I've proved that difficulty with mobility doesn't prevent you from learning to drive, I am encouraging them to have a go."



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Cost of loving

South Cheshire Health Authority has agreed to a reassessment of the needs of Brian Parker at the Royal Hospital for Neurodisability in London, after threatening a major cut in his care package (DN August).

Giles wins therapy

Giles Penman, the four-year-old with cerebral palsy, who lost out on his occupational therapy when his family moved from London to Bristol, will now get his treatment. (DN August).

Parking review

Drivers and pedestrians are being asked to comment on new measures to tighten up the orange badge scheme.

The Government plans to overhaul road traffic regulations which would require badge holders to produce badges on request for inspection. It would be an offence to refuse to produce the badge.

DN's national survey of the orange badge scheme, published in June, found widespread abuse.

Consultation ends 1 November.

Tel: 0171-271 4800

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ABC
BUSINESS PRESS



"You couldn't afford her - she belongs to Guide Dogs for the Blind!"

Living centre at risk

A Disabled Living Centre (DLC) faces closure if the Government wins a planning appeal to sell its three-acre site.

The Bristol centre at Fishponds was set up two and a half years ago to give advice and show equipment.

Bristol City Council blocked a Government bid to sell the site for residential use last year, but the Government appealed in July. The result of the inquiry should be known this month.

If the council wins, a local charity, Bristol Council for Disabled Adults, plans to buy the building and rent it out to the DLC and other groups.

Manager Pat Shutter said if the council lost, the centre would be stuck for another suitable building in Bristol. "It would be a shame to pull it down - it's in good condition."

Bristol was one of the last big cities in the country to get a DLC and it was the first user-led centre, run by disabled people.

Ms Shutter said about 7,000 people had come in for advice since it opened.

The centre is also facing financial problems. After the abolition of Avon City Council and its replacement with four unitary authorities, the centre has had to ask each for grants. One

council has indicated that its next grant will probably be cut.

Director of the Disabled Living Centre Council, Tony Travis, said: "It would be scandalous if it closed."

He added that the Government had been obstructive and had not helped the centre.

"Many of the 41 centres in the country are having funding problems as well."

Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation director, Bert Massie, said: "These centres are vital if we are to have effective community care and the Government is simply not providing the money for them."

School place costs dear

A five-year-old blind girl faces a weekly 260-mile round trip to school by taxi because her local education authority claims it cannot find a school place any nearer her home.

The girl will be a weekly boarder at the Liverpool School

for the Blind in Merseyside - 130 miles from her home in Lincolnshire. Lincolnshire County Council will pay her £20,000 annual travel costs.

A council spokesman said the cost was justified as it met her educational needs.

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"The In's and Out's of buying a mobility vehicle" also arms you with a series

Loan puts dogs on the spot

Guide Dogs for the Blind Association is reviewing its operations after it emerged that the charity had given out 60 cheap loans to staff totalling £1.7 million.

This included £280,000 to director general Julian Oxley for a house in Upper Basildon. He still owes £40,000, having sold his old home for £240,000.

An association spokesperson defended its actions. She said the charity had moved its head office from Windsor to Reading and had helped Mr Oxley, who earns £68,000 a year, move closer to work.

It insisted that most loans had gone to help highly-trained staff relocate.

"We are confident that the association's use of its donors' money is efficient and effective," said association chairman John Robertson.

But Jill Allen-King, of the National Federation of the Blind, called for more blind people from the federation to be included in the Guide Dog Association's decision making. "They can do this, but guide dog users struggle to get grants to build dog toilet areas," she said.

The charity has assets of £146 million and provides help to about 4,500 people each year.

of questions that you will want to ask before you make your mind up, giving you all the information before you make the important choice.

Get all the facts. Produced by the Mobility Matters Network of mobility specialists "The In's and Out's of buying a mobility vehicle" is available now, free of charge. All you have to do is simply call our 24 Hour Booklet Request Line on 0990 134 130 or write to Mobility Matters, Dept **DN9**, Freepost NH0170, Kettering, NN14 6YA. A booklet will be sent to you within 14 days from one of the Mobility Matters local Distributors.



Top dog: Minnie, a Collie cross Spaniel bitch, won the Best Disabled Dog event which was held in Eastbourne in July. Minnie had her leg amputated after being hit by a train earlier in the summer, but owner Dean Wicks, 11, from Westham in Sussex, says she is still full of life and coping well.

MARK DIMMOCK

Measles link to Crohn's

Government plans to give booster doses of the measles vaccine to pre-school children may increase the risk of the inflammatory bowel condition Crohn's disease, according to a stomach expert.

From October, all children offered the pre-school booster for diphtheria, tetanus and polio, will also be offered the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine.

Dr Andrew Wakefield, of the Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine Inflammatory Bowel

Study Group (IBSG), says more research is needed into the consequences of using the vaccine.

His team has suggested that it could have trebled the incidence of Crohn's in children.

But Dr Huw Jenkins, consultant pediatrician at the University Hospital of Wales in Cardiff, who has headed a separate study, has warned against speculation.

"There is only a possible link which is worth investigating," he said.

PARENTS for CHILDREN

JASCINTA (DoB 6.5.83)

Jascinta is 13 years old and came to this country from Nigeria when she was 2 years old. She is tall and slim and physically, she appears older.

Jascinta walks well but with a slight stoop and tends to move around a lot rather than sit in one place.

For no clear reason, Jascinta is not able to talk. However, her carer says that once you get to know her, she makes her needs and wishes well understood.

Attending a special school for children with learning disabilities, Jascinta looks forward to school and is gradually learning to be more accepting of other children.

Jascinta sometimes goes through periods when she wets herself and, at times, has shown obsessive behaviour, such as regurgitation or repeatedly watching the same video. Her behaviour is by no means consistent but manageable, particularly if Jascinta believes her carers are consistent and firm.

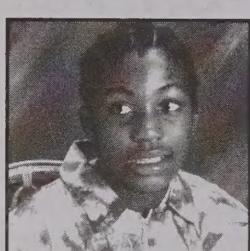
Jascinta usually gets on best with adults who she sometimes "winds up", thereby attracting the wrong sort of attention herself.

The things Jascinta enjoys most are going on outings, swimming, relaxing at home, video, TV, music and she would like a family that could offer her these sort of activities.

If you would like to know more about Jascinta, please contact:

PRAVINA GULABIVALA or BARBARA KELLER

Parents for Children
41 Southgate Road
London N1 3JP
Tel: 0171-359 7530
Charity Reg No. 280259



Box nightmare is finally over

The mother of an epileptic girl who was forced to live in a box for four months has vowed to help other parents get proper support from social services.

Kathy Brain, 13, has severe epilepsy, cannot walk or talk and can injure herself by banging her head, unless she is in a padded room.

Leicestershire Social Services built an open-topped padded wooden box for Kathy while they decided what to do.

Mother Linda said Kathy was in the 6 x 6ft box nearly all day, which upset the whole family. "You wouldn't put a dog in there," she said.

Social services finally padded Kathy's bedroom in May but her parents had to take out a loan from the authority to pay for extra construction work.

John Kershaw, divisional manager at social services, said: "There were a number of processes which had to be gone through. We have now supplied something at a quality which is acceptable to them."

William Brain said the family had been battling to get the right provision for years. He and



Boxed in: Kathy Brain

his wife have not had respite care since December and Linda claimed social services even considered using the box for Kathy while they had a break.

"After our struggle, I want to help any parents facing similar problems," she said.

Social services now plans to install a padded area in a respite care centre in Melton Mowbray.

OBE for Paddy

Paddy Masefield, who has ME, has been awarded an OBE for services to the arts.

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Gay man wins right to adopt

A homosexual man has won the right to adopt a severely disabled boy.

For the past 18 months, the man and his male partner have looked after the five-year-old who is deaf, speech impaired and has mobility problems.

In July, the Court of Session in Edinburgh overturned an earlier court decision which prevented the 34-year-old nurse from adopting him.

Lord Hope said it would not make sense to remove the boy from a caring environment where he was settled.

And in Dorset, a couple who were warned they could lose their disabled foster daughter unless they gave up smoking, have been told they can keep her.

Dorset Social Services had said they would prefer the ten-year-old girl to be in a smoke-free setting. She has cerebral palsy and mild asthma.

In July a fostering panel in Dorchester said that she should stay with the couple short-term.

Robin Sequeira, director of Dorset Social Services, said: "The fostering panel understandably recognised that the foster parents are offering warmth and care for a very needy child."

Shoppers lose free parking

Disabled shoppers have lost their free parking spaces in the Arndale shopping centre in Luton.

The centre used to offer free parking to orange badge holders but is now charging them 60p for two hours, in line with other shoppers.

Luton Council, which operated the car park until recently with a pay and display system, had been able to subsidise charges for disabled people.

The Arndale centre recently took over the car park and centre manager Brian McFarland defended the decision, as he said it did not receive a subsidy.

He said: "There are 63 wider parking spaces for disabled people, out of 2,500, and we have improved access with ramps and have added two extra toilets for disabled people."

Motoring expert Dave Allcock said: "This is happening all over the country and, unfortunately, is the price you have to pay for wanting equality."

Care plan slammed

Government proposals to overhaul the long-term care system have been slammed by a Conservative-dominated committee of MPs.

The proposals are designed to help people avoid having to sell their homes to pay for care, by allowing people to match state cover with private insurance.

A new report by the Commons Select Committee for Health *Long-term Care: Future Provision and Funding (third report)*† says media and public speculation over a possible funding crisis because of an aging population, is "based on unsound evidence, or indeed...downright alarmist."

It also says: "We deprecate the Government's failure to provide costings of its various options.

"Until such costings are provided, the taxpayer is being invited to sign a blank cheque."

Phone perk cut off

Disabled people in the London borough of Lambeth are losing a council-funded perk which paid their telephone rental charges.

But the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR) is challenging the move.

It says the council is acting unlawfully because no-one has been re-assessed.

John Keep, head of the independent living unit at RADAR, said: "The local authority must have assessed people as needing a telephone and had decided to fully meet their needs by providing rental charges.

"If the council has not reassessed them, it is acting unlawfully."

Cate Heath has epilepsy and diabetes, and is one of those who will lose out.

She said: "I've had the charges paid for me since 1989, which has really helped.

"I'm very annoyed that the council can now do this, as there are a lot of disabled people, some of them elderly and dependent on the telephone, who will be badly affected."

A council spokesman said: "We had to make a lot of cuts in our budget, and deciding what should go was very difficult.

"We used to pay for people's telephone installation and rental charges if they were disabled, but we can now only pay for the line installation."

The Government has also proposed that people could take a smaller initial pension, while keeping money in reserve to pay for long-term care later. The report says this would only work for a few rich people.

However Health Secretary Stephen Dorrell claimed the report had endorsed many of the Government's policies.

Mervyn Kohler, head of public affairs at the charity Help the Aged, said neither the Government or the committee was taking the lead on the issue: "We need a clear agenda so that people can plan for the future."

Meanwhile a report by the charity Counsel and Care, *More than Black and White**, says many elderly people from ethnic minorities do not always get the support they need from their families and often have difficulty in asking for support

from social services.

It highlights language difficulties, cultural and religious differences and a lack of translated information as key reasons for discontent. Many did not want to be seen as scrounging.

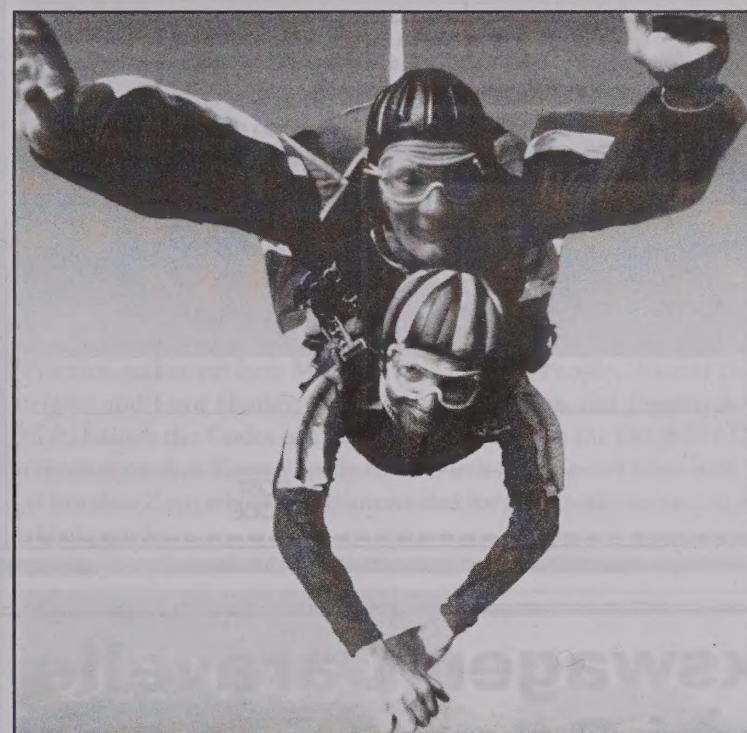
"We hope the report's findings will influence organisations providing services," said deputy general manager Les Bright.

• As *DN* went to press, Help the Aged was threatening court action against Sefton Council in Merseyside, unless it paid for the care home costs of 47 pensioners.

The pensioners all have assets of less than £10,000 and should be entitled to have their care paid for in full, but the council says it cannot afford to pay.

£11.50, from tel: 0171-873 0011

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Geronimo! Gary Osborne, of Singleton, West Sussex, a wheelchair user with cerebral palsy (cp), free-falls 10,000 feet from an aeroplane to raise £130 for Scope and cancer research. Instructor Clemm Quinn (top) makes sure Gary has a safe landing. John Guppy, of Bognor Regis, who also has cp, made the jump too. SCOPE

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Insurance firm uses cp excuse

An insurance company wants to charge Bob Findlay 75 per cent extra on his policy premium – just because he has cerebral palsy (cp).

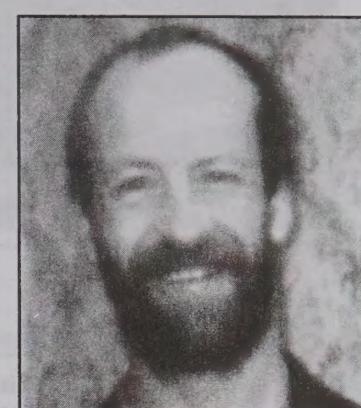
Bob, from Birmingham, is chairman of the British Council of Disabled People. He applied for an income protection policy with PPP Lifetime Care and was shocked to discover he would have to pay more.

His building society's financial advisor worked out the package which would have meant a premium of £15.23 a month. But when PPP received his medical records, this was increased to £26.65.

Bob said: "They did not specify what the problem was when I queried the increase, but I went back to the financial advisor. He made enquiries and told me it was because of my cp.

"I'm very mobile and I've never had anyone query the impact of cp on my life before.

"I sometimes get tension in my neck muscles, but nothing



Shocked: Bob Findlay

that would put me off work."

PPP spokesman Paul Bennett said cerebral palsy was judged to be a high risk factor when working out premiums.

"This policy pays out on inability to perform due to illness.

"Cp has the capacity to cause recurrent periods of disability."

Scope insurance expert, Chris Richfield, said: "The company is wrong to make such sweeping judgements. Cp has varying degrees of disability."

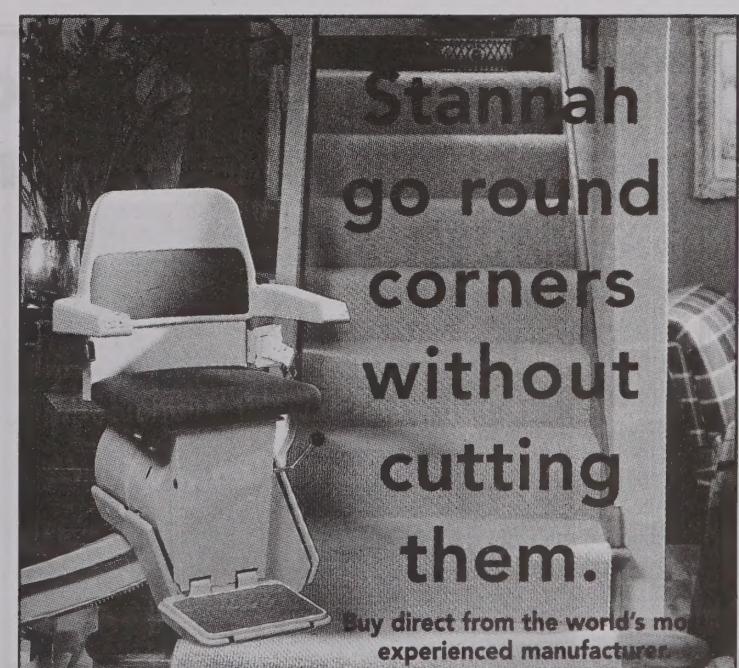
Mobility cuts take effect early

The Government has gone ahead with plans to cut Mobility Allowance without debate in the Commons.

Many disabled people were sent letters informing them that the change would take effect on 31 July.

It means that those receiving the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance will lose it if they go into an NHS hospital or community home for more than four weeks.

The issue may not be debated until October.



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Shoppers at Tesco's Beaumont Leys store in Leicester are finding their weekly shop can cost more than they budgeted for – if they take up disabled people's parking spaces (left).

The clamp-down at the store means some motorists are finding their cars are clamped and they are being forced to pay a fine to charity. Shoppers who use disabled people's spaces have to pay £25 or £50 to have the clamp removed, depending on how long they have been there.

The money raised is falling however, as more people find out about the fines and obey the rules, but £1,000 has already been raised for local disability charities.

As part of the campaign to keep the 34 spaces free, store manager Nick Smith is now planning to erect a sign saying: "You have pinched a disabled person's parking space. Do you want their disability too?"

ROGER BUSHBY

In brief

A good policy

Brent Council in London is looking for people living or working in Brent to help develop policies on disability and mental health care.

Fifteen people are needed to sit on the council's Disabilities and Mental Health Consultative Committee which provides a forum for disabled people.

Tel: 0181-937 1234

Parking perk

Orange badge holders in Liverpool will be involved in a pilot scheme allowing them to park their cars in a pedestrianised area.

But Liverpool police have voiced concern over the plan for Lord Street as they say the orange badge scheme is open to abuse.

The local traffic warden co-ordinator in the area has reported that more than 100 badges have been taken from inappropriate users.

Winning Wales

The National Lottery Charities Board in Wales has awarded £53,000 in grants to 18 charities.

They are the first awards to be made under the Board's Small Grant Scheme.

Cash hand-outs include £5,000 which is being given to the Memorial Hall in Whitland to provide toilet facilities for disabled people, and £4,000 for Carers for Disabled Holidays to fund a holiday for disabled people and their carers.

Working group

Disabled people who have successfully tackled barriers to employment are needed to contribute their experience to a study being carried out by Scope in Wiltshire.

The Living Options team in Swindon is doing an employment feasibility study which aims to identify innovative working opportunities in the area.

Tel: (01793) 542074

Housing service

The National Disabled Persons Housing Service has set up its national office at Brunswick House, Deighton Close, Wetherby, West Yorkshire LS22 7GZ. Tel: (01937) 588580.

Holiday help

The Holiday Care Service has compiled a directory of information sheets featuring respite care accommodation at more than 2,000 establishments throughout the UK.

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Toilet trouble

A disabled woman is furious after getting stuck in the toilet at Kings Cross station for nearly two hours.

Diane Hyatt, 52, who has osteo-arthritis and epilepsy, says she was a virtual prisoner in the toilet for disabled people, as no one came to her help when she repeatedly pressed the panic button.

Diane, from Stevenage, was on the way to meet her cousin when she popped into the toilet and was let in by a guard who had to unlock a combination lock on the outside of the door.

This was then locked on the inside, but when Diane came to leave, she could not operate the lock and got no response from the panic button for one and three-quarter hours.

"It was a really awful experience and it was lucky I did not have a fit," she said.

"I screamed and banged on the door which made my left hand swell up. I even had a cigarette in the hope that the smoke alarm would go off – which it didn't."

Eventually another passenger was let into the toilet which

secured Diane's release.

A Railtrack spokesman said the station had had problems with drug users getting hold of the keys. Combination locks on the inside and outside of the door had been installed in an attempt to prevent this. She said the inside lock had now been removed.

"The lock on the outside has been moved further down to make it more accessible."

She denied there was a problem with the panic button: "It was working and no one heard it."

Benefit shake-up on way

A major shake-up in the way benefits are paid to unemployed people will come into effect on 7 October, with worrying implications for disabled people.

Those looking for work will get Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) instead of Unemployment Benefit or Income Support.

Income Support will still be paid to those who cannot work, for example, some disabled people and carers.

Like Unemployment Benefit, JSA will be paid for only six months before it becomes means tested.

People who have not made enough National Insurance contributions will go straight on to this means tested benefit.

Pauline Thompson, director of the Disablement Income Group, is worried that disabled people with savings of more than £8,000 could take longer to find new jobs, and could be penalised by the means test after six months.

"Disabled people will be severely disadvantaged if they do not find work within the first six months," she said.

She was also concerned that people who had failed the already toughened test for Incapacity Benefit (which replaced Invalidity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance last year) might fail to meet the tougher rules for JSA because their disability still restricted them.

These new rules were designed to ensure that unemployed people were seriously looking for work.

The Benefits Agency has insisted that the rules will be slacker for disabled people.



Practice makes perfect: Minister for Disabled People, Alistair Burt, (right) and Lord Henley, Minister for Education and Employment, (left) launch the Codes of Practice which relate to the Disability Discrimination Act. Keeper Andy Hallsworth and his owl Max look on at London Zoo, which was commended for its friendly service to disabled people.

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Anger over pool closure

Disabled people in Bath are fighting a council decision to close their local swimming pool.

The small, warm pool at the Bath Leisure Centre was refurbished in April and re-opened as a fun pool for children, which the protesters say means disabled people can no longer use it.

The height and temperature of the pool have been lowered which they say puts it out of bounds and means that many people's health is failing due to a lack of water therapy.

Bath and North East Somerset Council has offered to raise the temperature in the main pool once a week but campaigner Susan Charles, who has a spinal injury, says this is not effective.

She believes at least 500 other disabled people in the area are losing out.

"At 3ft, the new pool is too shallow and not warm enough for many people like myself who need hydrotherapy at least three times a week. If I don't get it, I can't walk," she said.

"Heating up the big pool doesn't work and there is no other pool in the area to use apart from hydrotherapy pools at the local hospitals which cost more, and are too warm for some.



Protester: Susan Charles
 BRISTOL EVENING POST

"If Bath is the leading spa town in this country, why is it unable or unwilling to provide remedial spa facilities to its residents?"

Ms Charles and fellow campaigners hope they can persuade the council to make improvements to the work.

If this fails, she hopes to encourage them to upgrade a derelict spa pool in the city.

Council leisure services director, Robbie Hazelhurst, said people with disabilities would be no worse off.

"We have made the pool more accessible as the pool starts from a beach."

He added that the pool was not designed as a hydrotherapy pool and was for public swimming.

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Airbourne plight

A family is asking an airline to show compassion so their disabled son can fly to New Zealand in comfort.

Nigel and Nicky Faulkner, of Horley in Oxfordshire, are taking their six-year-old son Thomas, who has cerebral palsy, on the 24-hour flight to visit Nigel's family.

Thomas has great difficulty relaxing and sleeping and has jerky movements. To sleep he has to lie flat.

However Air New Zealand has told the family that if they want to let him do this safely, the only option is to buy another seat, costing £600.

Nicky Faulkner said they could not afford the extra cost and that, instead, Thomas would have to lie across them.

"It's very important for us that



Thomas (centre) with Nicky, Nigel and sister Sophie

Thomas makes the trip as Nigel's father is ill.

"I can't believe that Air New Zealand has never come across this before."

The Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR) has taken up the case and is urging the airline to make special arrangements.

Air New Zealand spokesperson, Claire McKay, said the air-

line carried a lot of disabled people, but could not afford to give free seats away.

"No other airline would do this either, it's not as if we are being unfair. We have done our best to be accommodating for the family."

Ms McKay said the airline had offered to try and fit Thomas's special car seat into the aeroplane instead.

MP claims disabled refugees lose out

Disabled refugees in Britain could be losing benefits due to mistakes made by the Benefits Agency.

Tottenham MP Bernie Grant fears hundreds of refugees are missing out after one of his constituents, a Sri Lankan man with one hand, was told his Disability Living Allowance would be withdrawn.

Mr K Kanapathipillai, 39, who has lived in Britain for six years with his wife and young child, has exceptional leave to remain in Britain. This means he is entitled to benefit which he has received since 1995. The Benefits Agency reviewed his case in June but later repealed the decision.

"I am shocked that these offi-

cials appear not to know their own regulations," Mr Grant said. "I am demanding that the Benefits Agency does a trawl of all similar cases to ensure other errors are corrected."

Claude Moraes, director of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, said many refugees around the country were in distress.

"Disabled refugees are especially vulnerable," he said. "These people do not know what they are entitled to."

Mr Moraes said the Government was taking advantage of the situation by not giving them enough information.

"They are waiting for people to be thrown into chaos before acting."

Coma is not so clear cut

Almost half of the people thought to be in a persistent vegetative state may have been misdiagnosed says a study.

Specialists at the Royal Hospital for Neurodisability in London, led by Dr Keith Andrews, found that 17 out of 40 patients had been wrongly diagnosed as being in a coma.

These people were able to communicate with buzzers and some could spell out letters.

People in comas are unaware of their surroundings and make only reflex responses, although they can breathe on their own.

The team found that 65 per cent of those misdiagnosed were visually impaired or blind, making it impossible for them to blink when threatened, or follow objects with their eyes – two traditional tests.

The findings raise a moral dilemma for families applying to the courts to allow doctors to remove the feeding tubes from relatives in coma.

The debate was ignited in 1992 when the House of Lords ruled that doctors could allow Tony Bland to die after he was left in a persistent vegetative state, following the Hillsborough disaster.

"One of our main findings is that the vegetative state is extremely rare and difficult to diagnose," said Dr Andrews. He is calling for multi-disciplined tests to identify the state.

At present there are up to 1,500 people in Britain who have been diagnosed with the condition.



A disabled activist has been prosecuted for throwing coloured water at the Department of Health during a protest over Incapacity Benefit in June (see left).

At Bow Street Magistrates Court in London, Barry Shaufler admitted criminal damage and was given a two-year conditional discharge.

Barry, who is visually impaired, must also pay £500 compensation to the Government as well as £50 costs.

He said: "There was no malicious intention – I just wanted to show how unfair it was. I'll be struggling to find the money."

Adoptive families are needed for Archie (02/02/93) and Aaron (29/12/93)



Archie and Aaron are brothers of white European/Asian origin. They need separate families with experience of disability, who can accept uncertainty about their future development and have the time and commitment to help them achieve their full potential. Both boys have developmental delays and may have learning difficulties.

Archie is making good progress, his mobility and sight are good, but so far he has not developed speech and his behaviour at times can be demanding.

Aaron's needs are complex. He had limited vision and although he is making progress he is severely delayed.

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In brief

Violence on the up

Violence against disabled people in the European Union is on the increase.

A report by the European Disability Forum, which gives an overview of small national surveys, says crimes often go unreported because people fear they will not be taken seriously. They also often fear reprisals.

The report highlights one national survey which showed that disabled people were three times more likely to be the victims of crime than able-bodied people.

Half of them had experienced some form of violence or harassment in the year leading up to the report.

The report, which is free of charge, defines violence as ranging from physical abuse to inappropriate medication.

Tel: (0322) 2738 0600

Canada's time warp

Disabled people in Canada still face discrimination ten years after the country passed civil rights legislation.

The Canadian Human Rights Act of 1985 made it illegal to discriminate against any group, including disabled people.

But the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) Annual Report 1995 says that "reasonable accommodation" is still not being made to meet the needs of disabled people.

Meanwhile, government figures show that spending on employment for disabled people has fallen by \$12 million despite the National Strategy for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities having \$159 million to spend over a five-year period on disability programmes.

US genetic law

New Jersey has passed the most comprehensive law protecting genetic information in the United States.

Under the Genetic Privacy Act employers cannot turn down someone's job application if they refuse a genetic test.

It is also illegal to gather, keep, or disclose someone's genetic information without their written permission.

It also offers protection to people seeking life or disability insurance, limiting how much genetic information can be used in determining premiums.

No mine ban

The United Nations has failed to agree to a ban on landmines, leading to estimates that 80,000 people will become disabled before it is discussed again in five years' time.

Axe falls on Helios fund

A Europe-wide programme which gives support to disability programmes will be axed in 1997.

The European Commission has also proposed to halve the budget for smaller schemes which will replace it, to just £5.4 million.

The Helios programme began in 1992 and gets its funding from the European Union.

Germany is opposed to funding such programmes because it feels social policies should be decided by individual states.

The European Parliament, which has the final say over budgets, has now proposed to retain funding for smaller replacement schemes at £11.7 million using an alternative method which has no legal basis. Britain is challenging this type of funding.

Arthur Verney, development worker with Disabled People's International European Union Committee, said: "It's a catch-22 situation. We have both a legal basis for funding and a more informal source, neither of which we can use."

Helios provides funding to promote good practice in housing, employment, education and training.

Richard Howitt MEP, who is co-president of the All Party Disablism Group of the



Richard Howitt MEP

European Parliament, accused the European Commission of not trying hard enough to face up to individual governments.

"The British are just as bad as the Germans on this, but it also shows that disabled people are pretty low on the Commission's list of priorities and not even worth fighting for."

Meanwhile, Britain is urging European leaders to exclude a disability discrimination clause from the revised Treaty of the European Union (TEU).

At the moment governments are leaning towards the inclusion of a clause on gender and racial equality but not for age, disability or sexual orientation.

Mr Howitt warned that the Labour party line was uncertain and that it "had not made a clear commitment".

Rights on the line

The European Commission is calling on member states of the European Union to adopt a rights-based approach to disability.

The Commission has put forward a resolution on rights for adoption by the council, which is made up of ministers from individual countries, who have the final say over decision making in the Union.

And following a proposal by Padraig Flynn, Commissioner with responsibility for Employment and Social Affairs, it has issued a "communication" outlining its ideas and plans. In line with the United Nations' 1993 resolution on Standard Rules for the Equalisation of Oppor-

tunities for Persons with Disabilities, it calls on countries to remove the social barriers faced by disabled people.

"They don't have the power to enforce this unless we get a clause in the Treaty of the European Union, but this is a positive step," said Rachel Hurst, chairperson of Disabled People's International European Region.

The communication also includes concrete proposals, such as getting a coherent approach to employment issues by 1997, on which the Commission is taking action.

The Commission hopes money will be made available from the £4.9 billion Structural Fund.

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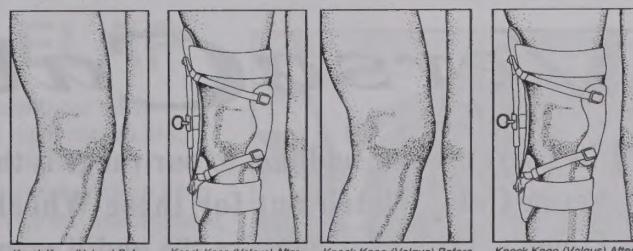
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Poles apart: Poland shot their way to victory in the European Football Championship for players with learning disabilities in June. But the Poles faced stiff competition in the final of the championships, which were held in Leicester. The highly skilled Belgian team took the lead with a lightning strike from Olivier Lambeau early in the first half. A thrilling volley from Marek Prosowski brought it back to level pegging. The final score was 4-2. Ten teams took part in the contest. England finished in eighth place, and the Scottish team finished seventh.

ROCK KITCHEN HARRIS

Golfer is in seventh heaven

Australian golfer Geoff Nicholas won the British Open Amputee title for the seventh consecutive time in July.

Nicholas, a below-the-knee amputee, built on a first round lead of four strokes to win the second round 19 strokes ahead of joint runners up Robert McDermott of

Canada and Michael Horsley from Derby.

He fought off a 90-strong field from Canada, Denmark, the USA, England, Scotland and Wales, to take victory in the Endolite-sponsored tournament at Staverton Park nine-stroke golf course in Northamptonshire.

For the third time, the women's title went to Canadian Zdenka Kitagawa, a below-the-elbow amputee, who finished two strokes ahead of Ada Myers.

Zdenka has won the Canadian Amputee Open Ladies' Championship three times since 1990.

Double blow

Britain's male and female goalball teams managed a remarkable double in June – by both finishing last in the game for blind people, at an international event on home territory in Gravesend.

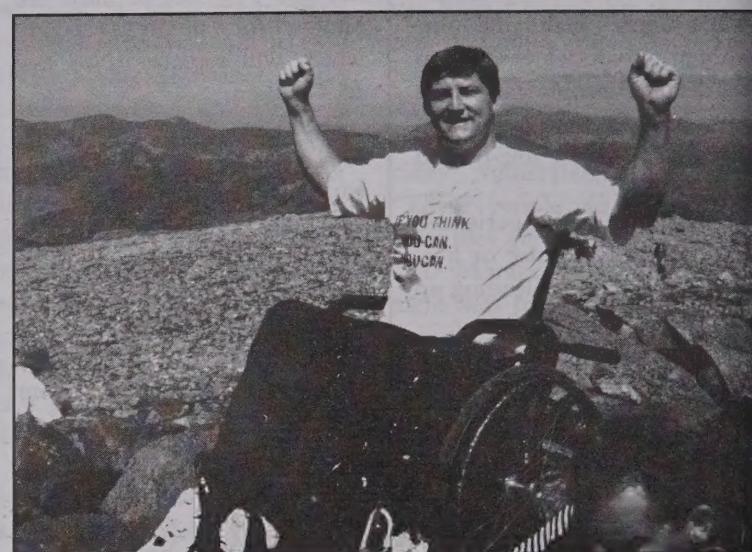
Spain won the men's tournament while the United States of America took the honours in the women's event.

Games first

The first UK Pan Disability Athletics Championships took place in Birmingham in June.

More than 250 British and foreign athletes with physical, learning and sensory disabilities took part in the competition.

John Nethercott, of Wales, and Purificacion Santamarta, of Spain, won the male and female athlete award.



A mountainous task: Jon Amos climbed 3,000ft up the Great Gable peak in the Lake District – in a wheelchair. Jon, 38, from Bitton who is paraplegic, managed the climb in just over nine hours, helped by a team of Hull prison officers. They raised £3,500 for the British Weightlifting Association of the Disabled, but managed to break Jon's wheelchair in the process. Jon said: "I don't believe anyone has ever managed to climb a mountain in a wheelchair in this country before. It was desperately dangerous but you have to do outrageous stunts like this to get any publicity."

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Awareness is the key

One in 12 women in Britain have breast cancer at some time in their lives. Alison Miller talks to Merle Davies about her experience.

Merle Davies was taking a shower when she found a lump in her breast. "I had that sinking feeling you have when you find something really wrong."

If you find a breast lump the chances are that it will be benign. Merle's GP tried to reassure her but referred her to the hospital for more tests.

She was told the results straight away and her fears were confirmed – the lump was a small, compact cancer.

"It was a shock. I went to a restaurant and had a sandwich and a cup of coffee. It was a kind of denial."

She was offered counselling, and the illness was explained to her, as well as the options for treatment. She could have had a lumpectomy – this would remove the cancerous tissue, but would have to be followed by radiotherapy, or a mastectomy – no radiotherapy, but the whole breast would be removed.

"It wasn't an easy decision," says Merle. "When I went into hospital for the surgery I agreed with the consultant that if he felt it was safer to do a mastectomy I would give permission."

"When I was compus mentis they told me they had taken the breast. I burst into tears."

Losing a breast is not easy for

any woman but, as a disabled woman, Merle found it a double blow. "When you're disabled often the image of yourself isn't that great. Having a mastectomy – the disfigurement – compounds your disability."

It's a loss that, she believes, should be acknowledged. "When you lose a breast you need to grieve. One part of you is relieved the cancer has gone. The other part feels devastated that you've lost something you've had since puberty."

She was offered reconstructive

'When you lose a breast you need to grieve. One part of you is relieved the cancer has gone. The other part feels devastated'

surgery and given three options. One method involved taking fatty tissue from the back and drawing it round under the arm, another would take it from the belly. Both could be restrictive and make it harder to propel a wheelchair. The surgeon was sensitive enough to Merle's disability to recommend the third option – a silicone implant. This would take

most time, but would not restrict Merle's movement.

Merle has had support from her church, friends, family and colleagues, but was surprised by the reaction of some people when she decided to have corrective surgery on her other breast.

"Some people say: 'Why are you putting yourself through this. Does it really matter if one breast is larger than the other?' But it's how you see yourself."

One in twelve women in this country will have breast cancer at some stage of their lives. Britain also has the highest mortality rate in the world – 15,000 women die from it every year.

But it is treatable and the earlier you catch it the better. Merle believes more should be done to make women aware of the disease. She is also concerned that severely disabled women who cannot examine their own breasts should be invited for more regular check ups.

Women over 65 are not asked to take part in the Government's breast screening programme, yet half of the women who develop breast cancer are over 65. At the moment only women aged 50-64 are invited to be screened. Merle thinks this is wrong: "They're sending out a message that women over 65 are not worth it."

Merle is now hoping for a clean bill of health, but breast cancer has affected every aspect of her life. She will be giving up her job this year partly because of it.

"When you have something major like breast cancer it makes you reassess your life. This is the first time that I've had something potentially life threatening. I feel I need space."

Women's Nationwide Cancer Control Campaign Helpline, tel: 0171-729 2229



Merle Davies: having breast cancer has made her reassess her life

ALISON MILLER

Be breast aware

- Look for any changes to the look or feel of your breasts.
- Examine them at the same time every month. Use a soapy hand in the bath or shower.
- Keep your fingers together and use the flat of your fingers. Press firmly, but gently moving over the whole breast.
- Feel every part including up towards the collar bone, into the armpit and behind the nipple.

Most breast changes are not cancer, but if you notice any changes or a lump, seek medical advice.

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PATRICK DEMARCHELIER

Research on target

Supermodels Naomi Campbell (above) and Kate Moss are dressing down to help a leading cancer charity raise money for research into breast cancer.

Breakthrough's aim is to raise £15 million to establish Britain's



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first centre dedicated to breast cancer research.

They are running a poster campaign called "Fashion Targets Breast Cancer", which features models sporting plain t-shirts with a distinctive target logo.

They have also produced the *Breast Health Handbook* which explains what breast cancer is, foods you can eat to cut down the risks of developing it, detection and treatment.

The Department of Health recently produced new guidelines for people working with breast cancer patients, to make the services more efficient.

But although much is being done to improve care for women who have the disease, Breakthrough says more should be spent on research, which it says is unfocused.

Theresa Dauncey, a spokesperson for the charity, says: "It is important to have a dedicated breast cancer research centre.

"There have been substantial improvements in the treatment of childhood leukemia where a lot of money is put into research. We believe we could have the same results with breast cancer."

Breakthrough, tel: 0171-405 5111

For t-shirt orders and stockist information, tel: (0990) 112226 £4.99 from bookshops

New drug hope to slow MND

The first drug to tackle Motor Neurone Disease (MND) is now available on the National Health Service.

There is still no cure for the fatal disease which kills more people in Britain than AIDS, but Rilutek slows down its progress.

MND is a wasting disease which usually results in death within three to five years of diagnosis. It affects about 5,000 people in the UK.

In a study of 1,000 people with

MND, the drug reduced the risk of death by 35 per cent after 18 months of treatment.

Rilutek regulates the amount of a chemical called glutamate which is released into the central nervous system.

Too much glutamate can damage motor neurones – the nerve cells which control muscle movement.

The move was welcomed by Motor Neurone Disease Association chief executive George Levvy.

David Shelton, a grandfather of three who has MND, said: "For those of us living with the death sentence of MND, the chance of extra time – to see a daughter married or the birth of

our grandchildren – is a tremendous boost."

Visually stunning

An American doctor has developed an implant which he says could restore sight to almost half of all blind people.

The implant, developed by Professor Eugene de Juan, involves placing electrodes on the surface of the retina.

Professor de Juan has already placed devices in the eyes of eight patients. Using just 25 electrodes, the process allows them to read individual letters.

The device replaces light receptors on the retina which have not grown or are damaged but only if the cells underneath are still intact.

The electrodes, which are just one hundredth of a millimetre wide, transmit electric pulses to the main nerves leading to the brain.

Eventually Professor de Juan hopes that a 2 millimetre grid, with hundreds of electrodes which would greatly restore sight, could cost as little as £30.

Mr Zdenek Gregor, a top retina consultant at Moorfield's Eye Hospital, said: "Those given the implant would remain visually impaired but this is a very exciting development.

"However it will be many years from now before it could be used widely."

Richard Lane, a spokesperson

for the Royal National Institute for the Blind, who lost his sight through a detached retina five years ago, said: "We must not think suddenly we have a cure for blindness."

"It would only ever help a proportion of people."

Rats hold key to paralysis

Swedish scientists have managed to restore movement to the legs of spinal-injured rats, but doctors have warned that the research will not benefit humans for some time.

The technique was pioneered by a team from Stockholm's Karolinska Institute and involves reconnecting severed nerves within the spinal cord.

Nerves travel through the white matter in the outer parts of the spinal cord, but attempts to reconnect them directly have failed because white matter produces a protein which prevents nerve growth.

The Swedish team has taken nerve fibres from other parts of the rats' bodies and used them to connect broken nerve endings to the grey matter within the spinal cord, which does not produce the growth inhibitor.

By treating them with a special glue and a chemical which encourages nerve growth, scientists have encouraged the severed nerves to grow through the grey matter and connect with nerves leading to the limbs.

Although the 18 rats treated

only gained partial movement in their limbs, the work has been hailed as a major step towards a cure for spinal injury.

But Peter Banyard, research director at the International Spinal Research Trust said there was still uncertainty over what had really happened to the rats.

"We are moving in the right direction but there is an awfully long way to go before we get to the stage of treatment in clinics."

Stephen Bradshaw, of the Spinal Injuries Association, was concerned at the number of false starts in spinal research.

He said: "It is easy to put all the money into things which won't bring results quickly, rather than the nitty-gritty areas of an accessible environment and housing."

Men try out HRT

Doctors believe Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) could stave off Alzheimer's disease in men.

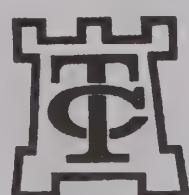
Evidence is already mounting for the effectiveness of the treatment in women (DN February), and a study of 100 women is being carried out at the Institute of Psychiatry in London.

Doctors believe the female hormone oestrogen could also protect men. But they warn that men would need to be given testosterone rather than oestrogen in case of side effects. Male brains convert testosterone to oestrogen which means levels could be built up.

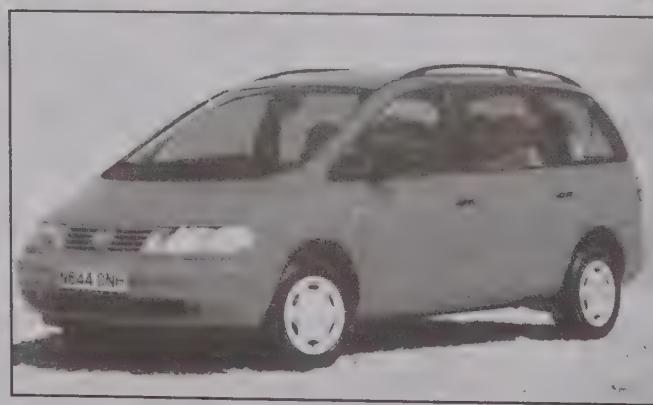
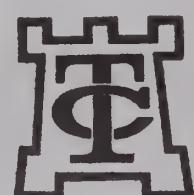


David Shelton welcomes the chance of extra time

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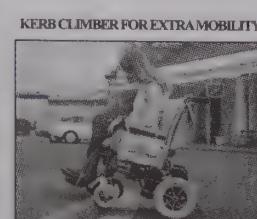
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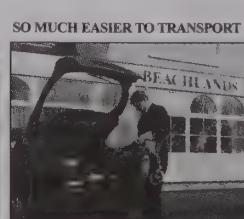


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DN9/MI

Which school is best?

It's back to school this month, and thousands of disabled children will be off to mainstream or special schools. Judith Stevens and Rahila Gupta made different choices about their children's education.



'Is it better to go to a mainstream school and struggle, be unhappy and never achieve, or go to a special school and be nurtured and encouraged to reach your full potential?'

Judith Stevens

The decision of whether or not to send your child to a special school cannot be taken lightly. It is a long process which begins with the honest, and often painful, realisation that your child is not an average child.

You then have to work out their strengths and weaknesses and how they can best succeed academically and socially.

You don't have to go through this alone. You can gain lots of support and advice from people like psychologists, speech therapists, teachers and parents of other disabled children. But you know your child best and it is ultimately your decision.

My son Jacob was diagnosed at three as being on the autistic spectrum with a speech and language disorder. After much discussion we knew that the way forward for him was to go to a special school.

The term "special school" covers many different types of schools that take children with a range of disabilities.

You have to find the most suitable school for your child. Get advice from professionals about the type of school they think would be appropriate and then visit those schools and any others you feel may be right.

The option of sending your child to a mainstream school is always in your mind and for many parents remains the ideal.

But having two other children myself at mainstream school I know the ratio of 20-30 children per teacher, the amount of independent study, the survival of the fittest in the playground and in the classroom. Jacob could not survive in this environment, never mind succeed.

At his school in Braintree, there is a high adult to child ratio and he is given lots of help

and attention. He is also encouraged to work to the best of his ability and praised when he achieves his goals. He is with children of a similar level and can prove himself within his own capabilities. At Jacob's school it is not a case of who is best or who can achieve the highest accolade, but who is trying hardest to reach their own goals.

Anything will not do. He is in a carefully monitored environment in which understanding a child's limitations and helping him overcome them are permanent.

Does sending a child to a special school stigmatize them? This is a problem for some parents and other adults, not for the child themselves.

Your prime concern must be for your child and what is best for them – not what other people think. Is it better to go to a mainstream school and struggle, be unhappy and never achieve, or go to a special school and be nurtured and encouraged to reach your full potential?

To me the decision is one of common sense and practicality. Jacob is going from strength to strength in a caring and encouraging environment. He is happy and he is learning. I know it was the right decision for him.



'Would we dare to ask today whether apartheid was beneficial to black people? And yet we argue that segregation is beneficial to disabled children.'

Rahila Gupta

My 11-year-old son Nihal has cerebral palsy. His physical difficulties are severe and they mask a level of intelligence which is average and, like any child, he requires stimulation.

Since the age of five he has been to a school for children with moderate learning difficulties and a school for children with severe learning disabilities. Each has failed him miserably.

For some reason, in Brent special schools, academic levels plummet in direct proportion to the rise in care. My son would come home from school

stiff, crying, occasionally bruised and locked into himself emotionally and physically.

In my experience, schools for children with severe learning disabilities shake rattles in the child's face and call it music lessons, and dip the child's hands in pots of paint and run them down sheets of paper and call it art lessons. Their academic work consists of assessing whether the child responds to its name.

In special schools Nihal was marooned in his splendid equipment and there were hardly any children who had the mobility and speech to communicate with him in that way.

I believe that all children would benefit from being in a caring, well resourced mainstream environment, if only parents hadn't been made to feel that their children weren't good enough for ordinary schools or that ordinary schools weren't safe enough.

Would we dare to ask today whether apartheid was beneficial to black people? And yet we argue that segregation is beneficial to disabled children. I believe it is the right of every disabled child to be included in mainstream education.

One of the ways Nihal communicates is by turning his face to touch your hands when you offer two choices and say what each hand stands for. When he went to a mainstream school, his able-bodied peers regularly "talked" to him in a way that adults never do.

Having had enough of special schools, when he was nine I placed Nihal at the primary school my daughter attended, whose head was committed to including disabled children.

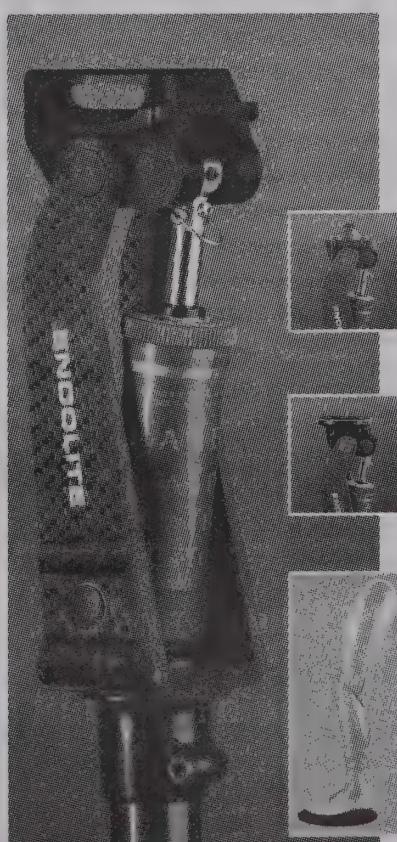
I paid for the one-to-one care he needed and the experiment was successful. Unfortunately the school closed down and we taught him at home for a while.

Brent education authority then decided Nihal should return to the special school he used to attend. Our story ended in March at a special education needs tribunal, where we won an appeal against the decision.

Nihal will be going to South Camden Community School this month. It is an ordinary school with special facilities to deal with disabled pupils.

He is looking forward to it and I am glad it has all been resolved.

For back to school offers see page 39.



The 160 Hi-Activity prosthesis For strength and durability

The Endolite Hi-Activity is a tough, long life, low maintenance lower limb with a resilient demountable discontinuous cosmesis. The 160 geometry reduces distal weight, has a stiffer assembly and is ideal for the most demanding of users.

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ENDOLITE

WHICH? It's time appliances were usable by everyone

rica

Designers and manufacturers of domestic appliances should make them easier for everyone to use, whatever their abilities, says consumer watchdog *Which?* in the August issue.

In its first major report of equipment assessed for ease of use by elderly and disabled people, *Which?* found that everything had drawbacks except the Miele Novotronic Premier washing machine – and that cost £850.

"We found that product manufacturers do not pay enough attention to the wide range of abilities of their customers," concluded the report.

Lindsey Etchell of RICA, who wrote the report, said later: "It was frustrating to find so many appliances had cons as well as pros. Just small things could make a big difference, like making a knob easier to turn."

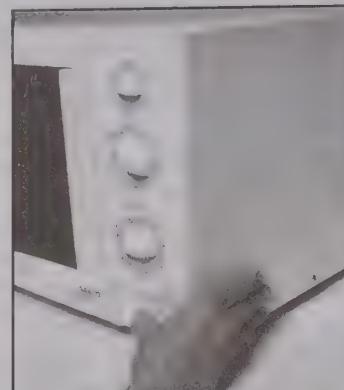
"If products were accessible to a wider range of people, more would be sold and they would be easier for everyone."

She hoped that the report would raise awareness among designers and manufacturers.

More assessments are planned.

What was checked out?

A selection of irons, toasters, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, food preparation machines and microwave ovens, all recent "best buys" or good performers were looked at. The needs of wheelchair users were considered, as well as people with sight or hearing difficulties, stiff and painful hands,



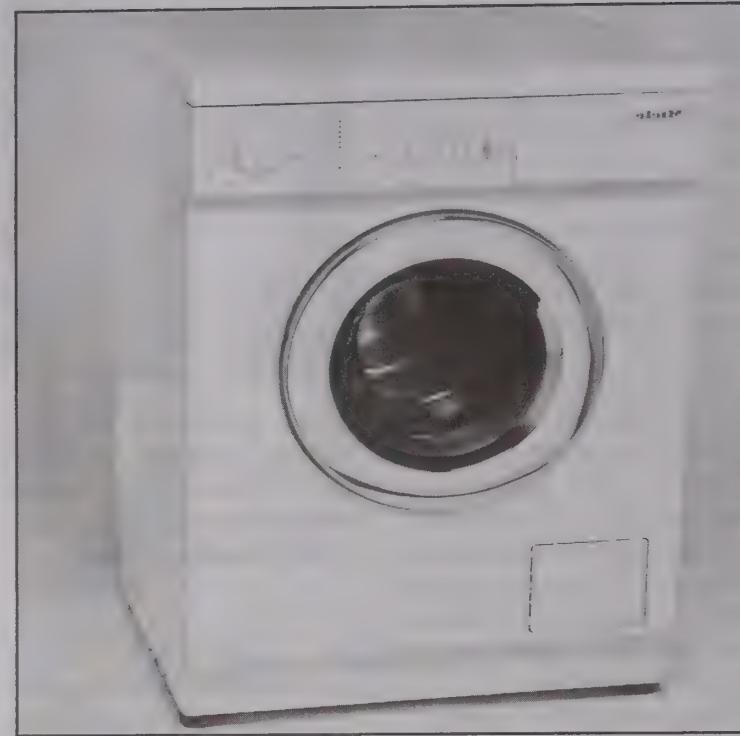
The Sanyo Cook n' Grill 1000 EM-G200, £140 (above) has rotary controls with large digits on the timer and good colour contrast, but the door control needed force to operate.

The Miele Novotronic Premier (right) was the most convenient washing machine tested, with wide opening doors, controls

shoulders or backs, the use of only one hand, a tremor, and difficulty with bending or walking. Results were given as "for" and "against".

Selecting the Kenwood Chef KM200 table mixer, £150, as a best buy, the report noted: "A food processor should save you a lot of manual cutting and chopping, but the ones we assessed were difficult to set up."

A best buy for people with poor sight was the Kenwood ST450 iron, £22.



NICK WRIGHT

controls and clear labels.

"None of the toasters was ideal", but the Rowenta TP380, £43, and the Philips HD4807, £22, were worth considering.

Vacuum cleaners had so many



needing little strength to operate and legible labelling. The Kenwood HM400 electric mixer, £24 (above), had a comfortable handle but with limited space below it, and it was heavy and vibrated.

drawbacks that there were no best buys.

See *Which?* in your local library or tel: (01992) 822800 for subscription details.

Which? design points for manufacturers and consumers

Controls

- Easy to reach – to avoid as much bending and stretching as possible
- Protruding ones are preferable – recessed controls are harder to grip and clean
- Well spaced, not too cramped together
- A reasonable size with a non-slippery surface
- Easy to operate without applying too much pressure or awkward pushing and twisting
- Large, easy-to-read labelling with good colour contrast
- Well-placed tactile markings to guide blind people

Accessories

- Easy to connect and disconnect – not requiring precision or strength
- Separate storage section from the appliance – to reduce its weight
- Avoid fiddly parts which are difficult to set up

Stability

- Products that do not easily tip over
- Effective anti-slip bases – helpful for one-handed users

Portable products

- Not too heavy to lift
- Good balance and shape
- Comfortable and well-placed carrying handle

Cleaning

- Avoid nooks and crannies that trap dirt – food crumbs, dust and so on
- Avoid sharp edges

Hot surfaces

- Unacceptable where people might hold or lean for support



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Overlooking Poole Harbour, and set in a beautiful 350 acre site with a varied accessible landscape, the Barn at Holton Lee has been specially designed for people with disabilities and carers. The Centre is small and friendly, providing a homely atmosphere for up to eight guests. It is an ideal place for a rest from the noise and busyness of everyday life. For details please contact: The Administrator, Holton Lee, Freepost BH1679, POOLE BH16 6BR Telephone: 01202 631063 Minicom: 01202 631263

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The Renault Eco



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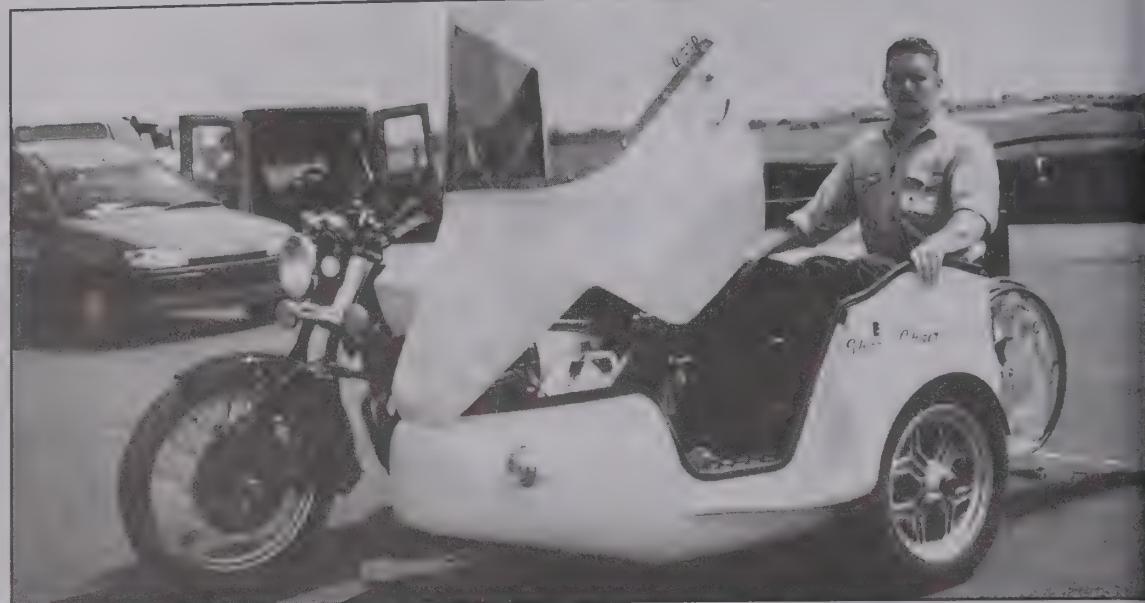
The Nissan Serena

Be a biker – and take your chair with you

Biking man Ron Salt tries out ShareChair



Easy does it: Ron at the controls with Mike Harper at his elbow



Satisfied customer: Dave Langley shows how he gets into his ShareChair

Some anarchic souls refuse to be content with what our able-bodied cousins think is safe and convenient transport for us.

One such is Mike Harper, paralysed below the waist since a motorcycle accident in 1975.

He didn't ride again for 15 years, but when he heard of the pioneer work of disabled bikers in America, he decided to reassert his right to choose his own transport.

He uses a motorcycle for pleasure – and he wanted anonymity.

The first problem for a would-be disabled biker is holding the thing upright when stationary. A sidecar takes care of that. Mike's wheelchair went in the sidecar, but then he made the wheelchair-carrier the rider's route to the saddle, and that was a whole new concept.

Last year, with other disabled bikers asking him if he would build them a copy, he took his

machine to Wasp Engineering in Salisbury.

The first production model of ShareChair was at the Scottish Mobility Roadshow in May.

A motorbike – for you?

Is this new mobility aid serious, practical, affordable, safe?

If you have two legs (real or artificial) and reasonable grip, you shouldn't find a motorcycle difficult to control. And if it has automatic transmission and auto-starting, it should be manageable by someone who has driven an automatic car.

With low initial cost, long life, low maintenance, high fuel economy, good resale value and low insurance, it is good value.

Motorcycling is as safe as any other form of transport, but riders and passengers are more vulnerable in comparatively minor collisions because they are outside and tend to keep going after the bike stops.

Test run

The choice of motorcycle is up to you. The combo I tested (the first time since 1958!) had a Honda CB750A(F1), selected by Mike Harper because it needs little modification to the standard controls for a leg-disabled rider.

We eased away from standstill as cautiously as a laden supertanker, remembering to compensate for the inertia of the ShareChair with gentle counter-pressure on the handlebars.

Basic low-speed manoeuvrability was very good on narrow, winding roads; sharp swings to left and right precipitated no skittish behaviour. Being wider than most sidecars, ShareChair has an advantage on left-hand turns, even more with no passenger.

When correctly set up, a combo should run true, virtually hands-off, on a normally cambered road at steady speed. The ShareChair passed the test.

Braking from 18mph, the action was reassuringly positive; the balance of forces less so. It felt as though a lot of practice would be needed to guarantee a smooth, straight stop.

In lieu of reverse gear, disabled riders can pivot the combo round the wheel of the sidecar. But never enter a blind alley less than two-and-a-half times your width.

ShareChair can also give a comfortable ride – I've tried it – and Mike is working on modifications for wheelchair passengers.

To drive a motorbike with ShareChair (weight 95kg), you will have to be 21 so as to be eligible for the larger bikes.

At £3,500, you may think it is a pretty pricey luggage rack. Former motorcyclists will not, and four have already been sold.

It's a liberating experience, being on three wheels. A car may confer mobility, but it's a ball and chain compared to a bike!

Wasp Engineering, tel: (01722) 744343. Ron Salt, Disabled Motorists' Federation, is coordinator of RAMP.

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Bust that rust

Brian Kimmens found that checking out the warranty for his new van conversion paid off. Kate Enzer, of the independent research charity RICA, explains how warranties work.

Last year Brian Kimmens, of County Durham, bought a new converted Renault Extra from a large conversion company to accommodate his wife Doris's wheelchair ramp. Nine months later patches of rust appeared at various points where the floor had been lowered.

The conversion firm asked him to get estimates for the repairs, which they would arrange under their warranty. Mr Kimmens realised his vehicle was only under warranty against rust for 12 months. But he discovered when the conversion firm bought the vehicle it had come with a six-year anti-corrosion warranty.

As a result, the conversion company paid for the repairs and extended the warranty for a further 12 months.

What is a warranty?

A warranty is an assurance from a manufacturer that if their goods are faulty they will rectify the problem free of charge. Warranties typically only cover faults in manufacture or materials if a defect occurs, despite careful treatment and maintenance.

Although most manufacturers know their warranties, they may not be legally enforceable.

Rust warranties

Rust warranties generally fall into two categories – perforation warranties and surface or paintwork warranties. Perforation rust begins from the inside and attacks internal cavities and most manufacturers will offer a six-year warranty against this. Surface or paintwork rust occurs on the outside of the car. Warranties tend to



Brian and Doris Kimmens with their Renault Extra

GEORGE SWIFT

be for shorter periods for this – usually one to three years. (The details of the top 10 manufacturers are shown in the table below.)

Normal wear and tear, or repairs, adjustments and replacements not carried out by the manufacturer or an authorised agent aren't covered.

However, this is interpreted in different ways. Most manufacturers will uphold the warranty on any part of the vehicle that has not been affected by the repair, but some might say that any structural modification invalidates the whole warranty.

Having an anti-corrosion warranty doesn't necessarily mean that, if your vehicle has perforation rust before it is six years old, the manufacturer will fix it for free. In most cases you must keep the vehicle clean

(rust due to pollution is not usually covered).

In many cases you must have your vehicle regularly inspected for rust by an approved agent and keep proof of these inspections. Not all inspections are free. You must bring any rust to the attention of an authorised agent as soon as possible. Failure to do any of the above may mean you are not covered.

Conversion firms

We contacted ten conversion and adaptation companies to find out what warranties they offered. Most have warranties to cover their work, including rust on the car. Only three offered no formal warranties. Instead they offer a "goodwill warranty" and said that if any problem arose with their equipment or as a result of their

work, they would fix it for free.

The companies who do offer a formal rust warranty only offer them for 12 months. This only covers the equipment they have installed or the part of the vehicle which has been altered.

The manufacturer's six-year perforation warranties may never be needed because rust is not a real problem in cars less than six years old.

In 1989 a Consumer's Association survey showed 26 per cent of all six to eight-year-old cars had serious rust. In

1995 it was found that only eight per cent were affected.

"Goodwill warranties" offered by conversion companies may be worth more than warranties given by manufacturers with their many conditions because conversion companies tend to have a lot riding on their reputation.

If you have a problem you would like taken up, write to RICA/DN Consumer Clinic, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.



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MANUFACTURERS' WARRANTIES

manufacturer (top ten)	perforation rust (years)	surface rust (years)	frequency of inspection	cost of inspection	rust warranty still valid after conversion
Ford	6	1	none		no*
Vauxhall	6	none	every service	free with service	no*
Rover	6	3	annual	free with service	no
Peugeot	6	1	none		no*
Renault	8	none	10,000 mile service intervals	free with service	no*
Nissan	6	3	3yr, 4yr, 5yr	free with service	no*
Volkswagen	6	3	none		no*
Citroen	6	1	2yr, 4yr	0.6hr dealer's work rate	yes†
Fiat	8	3	3yr, 5yr	free with service	no*
BMW	6	1	biannual	0.4hr dealer's work rate	no

* warranty only valid on parts of car not affected by conversion

† affected area must be re-treated with anti-corrosion materials

Letters to the Editor



Disability Now, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ
Minicom: 0171-436 9914 Fax: 0171-436 4582
e-mail: dnow@d-access.demon.co.uk

A way with harassment?

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 does not cover harassment against people with disabilities at home or out socialising.

But under the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, section 154, it is an offence to use threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour with intent to cause harassment, alarm or distress.

Although the offence was primarily intended to tackle racial harassment, the provisions apply equally to

harassment on the grounds of disability.

The maximum penalty is six months imprisonment or a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale, or both.

Any disabled person who suffers harassment must report all incidents to the police at once.

Peter Fuller
Immingham, Lincolnshire

Have any readers experience of this Act being used for disability harassment, or of police taking an interest? Editor

Edinburgh traffic wardens are notorious and an orange badge means nothing to them. If any readers intend visiting Edinburgh, watch out for the yellow peril.

R C McLagan
Longforgan, Dundee

Advertisers...

Could companies who advertise include a starting price? It is annoying to send for a brochure and find I can't afford a product.

J Palmer
Shinfield, Berks

Edinburgh festival hazard

In your City Focus (DN, May), Dougie Herd did not mention the parking problems in Edinburgh – for ablebodied and disabled drivers.

I have been a disabled driver for 30 years, and on visits to most of the main cities in Scotland and some in England I have had two parking tickets – guess in which city? Yes, Edinburgh.



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'Special care' holiday cover

I am disturbed by the comment in your investigation of holiday insurance (DN, June): "Would the £30 price difference at Leisurecare be worth it?"

It would appear that Rachel's declaration comprised CP with serious disablement, a wheelchair and some degree of visual impairment.

We are the only company able to offer a special policy, aptly called Special Care, which is actually designed for travellers with serious disability or medical condition – all the way up to terminal cancer.

CP alone would not prevent an applicant from obtaining standard insurance at normal premium, but it is very questionable whether the case put forward by the researcher would be adequately insured on such a contract, as offered with varying efficiency by the other companies.

The higher price quoted for Special Care reflects the extra cover built into the policy and its specific application to medical problems. It covers deterioration of a medical condition before or during

travel, including of the travelling companion; wheelchair and medical aids, including hire cost of alternative equipment; and travel costs of a replacement carer, or a "mobility allowance" to hire a professional replacement. We can also extend cover to include high value chairs and medical aids.

All in all, the quotation given to Rachel was appropriate and, in my view, not expensive.

Michael Berry
Leisurecare Insurance Services
Swindon, Wiltshire

Brownie points for P&O ferries

I am a 19-year-old student and enjoy travelling. But when I set off for a weekend in France with P&O last month, I was expecting problems. There were none.

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Jenny Osborn-Jones
Berkhamsted, Herts

Where do you draw the line?

John Clancy would like to see a grant for people who have to move house because of their disability (DN, July).

Where would he like positive discrimination to end?

Many people have to move home for different reasons and make some adjustments to their lifestyle. Comments like his do more to isolate disabled people.

As a disabled person, does he wish to be treated equally with

the rest of the so-called "normal people"? If so, you have to take the hard knocks with everyone else.

I too have a condition which will eventually mean I will be totally incapacitated, but in the meantime I will endeavour to lead a full life without tying myself to further Government handouts.

John Shaw
Newark, Notts

very interested in studying my wheels.

I have often felt like a monkey in a zoo when folks stand and gawp at me, but I really did not mind the apes' attitude and, indeed, I felt strangely touched.

Mrs G A Wallis
Littleover, Derby

DN's diary

Lilley miracle?

If Social Security Secretary Peter Lilley ever seeks spiritual inspiration for his crusade against benefits fraudsters, he need only look to Italy. There, a police crackdown has produced a "Miracle of Naples".

50,000 people are no longer "disabled" or need benefits.

Tesco critic

Good that Tesco asks customers about its services. Pity about one complaint: "No customer/staff without shirts please...also disabled. No dogs, also blind dogs, into stores or at the entrance of the stores, please."

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Wheels of fortune: Cosmas Okoli and a motley selection of wheelchairs

GEORGE ARCHER

Cosmas Okoli is tracking down unwanted wheelchairs which he hopes will improve the lives of the disabled community in Nigeria. He talks to Rod Hermeston.

Clumsy old bone shakers no longer used by the National Health Service fill the backyard where Cosmas Okoli is staying.

But to disabled people back in Nigeria these wheelchairs will make the world of difference.

Cosmas, 34, runs a centre in Lagos which provides and maintains mobility aids for disabled Nigerians. He is also a disability rights campaigner and international wheelchair table tennis player.

Cosmas visited Britain at the end of July to get obsolete wheelchairs to take back.

"We are after chairs which people may think are no longer useful but which we can refurbish," he says.

He is being helped by social worker Desma Taylor, who put him up during his stay in Nuneaton.

The freight company TNT is transporting chairs cheaply and North Warwickshire Health Authority has agreed to supply obsolete wheelchairs. Cosmas welcomes individual donations of chairs but warns that people should not give away those owned by the NHS.

Cosmas has been paraplegic since he contracted polio as a child during a civil war which prevented him from getting treatment.

He uses crutches to get about, or occasionally a wheelchair. He is married with a nine-month-old son.

Cosmas knows he was

fortunate to come from a middle class family and have an education which must be paid for in Nigeria. But he says it still took determination to convince his teacher father that it was worthwhile.

"Disabled people are viewed as unproductive in Nigeria. Families would rather pay for the education of their able-bodied children. I think I was the only disabled person in the whole town who went to school."

'It is difficult to influence a government which you did not elect. You can only prick their conscience.'

He later studied medical physiology at the University of Lagos College of Medicine. There were only six disabled students at the university.

Mobility has always been a problem for him, from crawling around at school to finding it impossible to get a replacement pair of crutches in Lagos.

But this fired Cosmas up. Even before going to University he had developed a device to allow himself to drive using only his hands - the first one in Nigeria.

After leaving university in 1988, he served a year of

compulsory youth service making car conversion devices, callipers and crutches.

For this, and work in disability sport, he won the best youth worker of the year award.

Cosmas set up his Mobility Aid and Appliance Research and Development Centre in Lagos in 1991 with an initial government grant. It is the only one of its kind in Nigeria and more than half of the workers are disabled.

The centre asks companies to sponsor individual pieces of equipment so that they can be given free to disabled people.

He gets living expenses from the Ashoka Trust, a charity which funds individuals to make changes which will improve the lives of poor people around the world.

Nigeria has no welfare system and 80 per cent of disabled people in the country cannot afford wheelchairs.

"Many disabled people who cannot walk can be seen crawling around on pavements. You see them crossing roads - it is dangerous. In recent years they have taken to moving around on a type of skateboard."

Crutches and callipers can be made locally but wheelchairs are a problem, which prompted Cosmas's trip to Britain.

But he acknowledges that much more needs to be done. Disabled people are the poorest in society and yet Nigeria is quite well off by African standards.

"Disabled people are often not seen as productive and are not given an education or training - even disabled

graduates have problems getting work.

"If you don't have a job your family have to provide for you. But often they cannot and you are encouraged to go onto the streets to beg. Passers-by sometimes simply assume that a disabled person is a beggar."

Cosmas believes the country needs laws giving rights to disabled people.

At the moment, their rights are simply ignored, he says.

"The Government has not even begun to address the problems of architecture. There are public buildings being built today without taking the needs of disabled people into account."

Cosmas runs a campaign for disability rights from his Lagos centre. This involves press campaigns and letters to the military government. (The same government which hanged the environmental activist and writer Ken Saro-wiwa earlier this year for speaking out against it.)

So far calls to have disabled people's needs recognised in the constitution have been unsuccessful.

"It is difficult to influence a government which you did not elect. You cannot use political power by threatening not to vote for them. You can only try to prick their conscience. It can be dangerous, but you have to be willing to take risks while

being diplomatic.

"My hope is that we will get to the point where disabled Nigerians are treated as citizens with rights and privileges."

As well as his work with the centre, Cosmas still finds time to indulge in another passion - sport. He won a silver medal for table tennis in the 1990 Stoke Mandeville world wheelchair games.

In 1995 he was elected as the first disabled chairman of the Nigerian Sports Association for the Disabled, an organisation set up by the Government.

"The general lack of provision extends to sport. But disability sport is growing and is also regarded as a useful means of rehabilitation and creating a belief in themselves among disabled people," he says.

The Government has now begun to provide money for some disabled athletes.

This year he was too busy to take part in the Paralympics but led the team to Atlanta and attended conferences and made contacts - with a view to improving disability sport in his own country.

But he promises: "I'll be there at the next Paralympics in competition and I'll be going for gold."

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Party popsters: a newly bleached blonde Björk (above) and a revitalised Johnny Rotten (below) set light to Phoenix



IAIN DUCK/COVENTRY EVENING TELEGRAPH

Perfect daze

Simon Minty takes in music, massage and mellow vibes at the Phoenix Festival

The Phoenix Festival is only in its fifth year but, with the absence of the Glastonbury Festival this year, it attracted the big names and the crowds.

The Mean Fiddler, organisers of this year's festival (18-21 July, Long Marston near Stratford upon Avon), had claimed full accessibility, so I drove up for the opening day to check out the facilities and take in the atmosphere.

Kooky Icelandic songstress, Björk was headlining along with rock chick Alanis

'There are thousands upon thousands of people everywhere and the smell of sun tan oil, food and cannabis is intoxicating and delightful'

Morissette, punk pensioners the Sex Pistols and dinosaurs David Bowie and Neil Young.

Going to festivals can be expensive. Phoenix cost £65 for all four days, although daily passes were available at £25. But you get a lot for your money: seven stages with over 50 acts a day, five-a-side celebrity football, a comedy tent, healing area, children's area, funfair, go-karting and circus performers.

There were licensed bars – a pint of bitter cost £2.30. Food was available but expensive – a jacket potato cost £2.50. But camping is free.

If you have heard the rumours about these festivals: the sex, drugs and rock and roll, well, they're true. But the unsavoury stereotypes, sinful lifestyle and general debauchery are more mythical than factual.

The promotional material says it's "good clean fun" and I would agree with that. The non-clean aspects are more to do with hygiene than immorality. It is a chance to just do your thing and listen to great music for a few days.

The queues to get in were very long in the afternoon of the first day, but virtually non-existent after that.

When I finally arrived, I set up my tent, rather badly. It was only when I took the tent down that I spotted the instructions in the bag. I decided to have a look round, get my bearings and work out what I was going to see over the next few days.

The enormity of the festival hits you as you walk into the main arena from backstage. There are thousands upon thousands of people everywhere and the smell of sun tan oil, food and cannabis is intoxicating and delightful. There is every type of person you can



imagine and earrings, tattoos and dreadlocks make up the majority of essential fashion requirements.

I went to the Healing Area



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JAMIE FACER

unfortunately was winding down time I arrived. But I did manage a massage and a little shiatsu was extremely enjoyable. And the Comedy Tent and visited

one or two of the many music stages and finally watched David Bowie on the main stage before rolling into bed.

I was awoken early the next morning by the mixture of noise and the increasing warmth of the sun.

I spent the next few hours fruitlessly looking for the day's



THE PHOENIX 1996

running order, undressing and jumping into waterless showers and using "overloaded" toilets.

I decided to find another campsite and borrowed their facilities and treated myself to a decent pub lunch that I knew would last me most of the day.

I went back to the arena and watched the Wild Hearts and Dodgy, who were contrasting but equally as good for me.

Here I got talking to a couple of girls and, out of research and courtesy, shared a strange smelling cigarette.

There were several people using wheelchairs, although the uneven ground often meant a friend helped.

I returned to the Comedy Tent and watched a couple of good performers. Comedy seems misplaced at the festival and the acts have a hard time, but I appreciated it being there as it is one of my passions.

By now it was early evening and I returned to the main stage to watch Alanis Morissette. The whole area was packed and I couldn't see a thing. I went to the mixing desk very near stage, and joined some wheelchair users on a platform designated for them. Most of them went to festivals regularly and their music knowledge was phenomenal. I suddenly felt very old and out of touch.

As to accessibility, Lee, a 22-year-old guy from Kent, said "It's better to come with a group of friends. It's not perfect, a few things have to be sacrificed, but the gain outweighs the hassles."

Alanis Morissette was awesome and she really got the crowd going. Unfortunately, Neil Young and Crazy Horse who followed seemed very self-absorbed and I was pretty dis-

appointed with their set.

A few useful tips for anyone considering going to a festival. Get a map of the site. This will save aimless wandering. And a running order ensures you don't miss the acts you want to see. Take a flag to pin point your tent as coming back in the dark, worse for wear, can confuse your bearings. Set up a camp near a light, as this is a major help for twits like me who forgot their torch. There were disabled facilities at Phoenix, but accessibility is possible rather than assured.

A festival is an experience I would thoroughly recommend, but preparation will make all the difference.



Canvas capers: Simon battles with his tent (above). It was worth it in the end (below).



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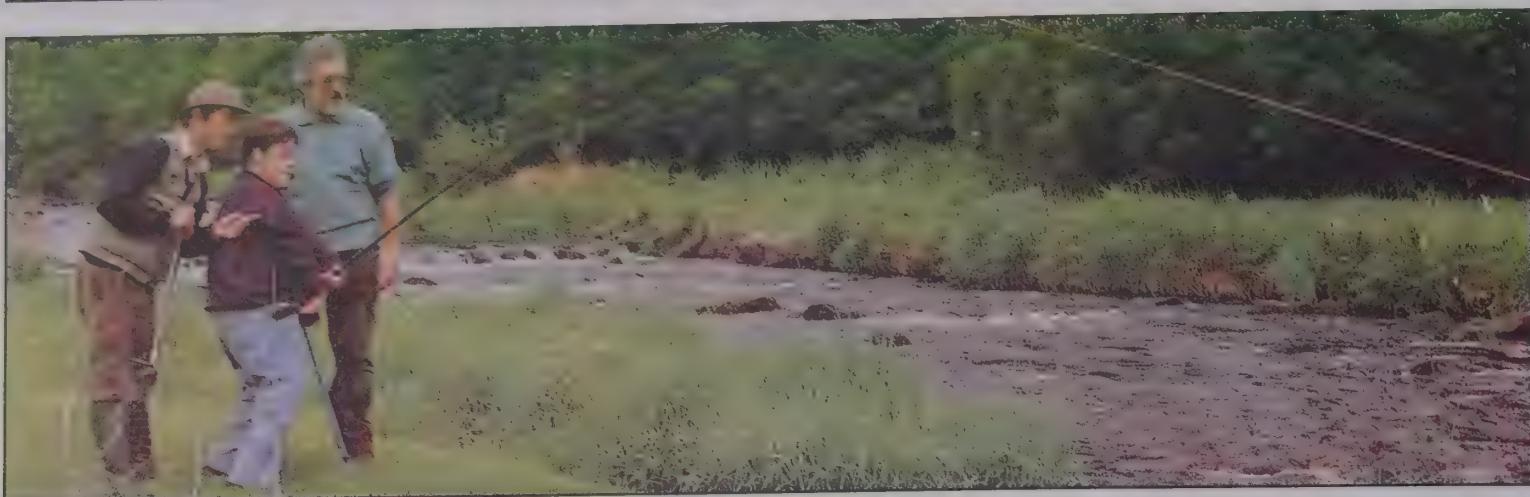
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DN9/96

Trip is prize catch

Fresh salmon was on the menu for two *DN* readers in August, thanks to Total Hygiene (which markets the Clos-O-Mat toilet). Raymond Knight (below) and 13-year-old Daniel Munnings (above left) won an all-expenses-paid fishing trip to Scotland after entering a competition in *DN* in February.

"It was absolutely fantastic," enthused Raymond from Andover. "It was so peaceful and it was just nice being there in lovely surroundings."

They spent the days fishing by the beautiful River Doon and stayed in a luxurious hotel where they were treated to slap-up meals and champagne.

Raymond, a wheelchair user, was impressed. "Mr Wellan from Clos-O-Mat was great. Everyone was so friendly and everything was accessible. It's just a shame I didn't catch anything."

Even though the salmon were playing hard to get, he still had a wonderful time. "It was one of the best holidays I've had."



Winning smile: Raymond with friend Kate Ankers

A reel winner

Congratulations to Morag Cross from Kirkintilloch who wins a £20 cinema voucher. She got all the questions right in our 100 years of cinema quiz (*DN*, August).

The answers were: 1. James Whale 2. *Freaks* 3. *City Lights* 4. Charles Laughton 5. *King's Row* 6. Harold Russell 7. *The Men* 8. Spencer Tracy 9. Douglas Bader 10. Anne Bancroft 11. Ratso Rizzo 12. *Ryan's Daughter* 13. Jane Fonda 14. *Children of a Lesser God* 15. Neil Jimenez 16. Tom Cruise 17. Tom Cruise 18. Brenda Fricker 19. Jack Nicholson 20. Robert de Niro 21. *Philadelphia* 22. Kevin Spacey 23. *Things to do in Denver* 24. Long John Silver 25. Demi Moore

Theatre

Martin Guerre

The story of Martin Guerre has been reiterated in many guises since the real life events took place in Toulouse.

In this musical (Prince Edward Theatre, London) Guerre's wife, reveals that the man everyone had assumed was her husband was really one Arnaud de Thil. Martin had left 12 years before to fight in Spain, meeting de Thil on the way and giving him all the knowledge about himself to enable him to assume his identity.

Martin finally returns and stigates a trial to prove his identity. He wins and condemns his wife to be burnt at the stake. What disability angle could this lead to? One character, who never named (the case with most of the cast), has a limp. He also has every negative image of disability conceivable: mental inferiority (staring on at events with an expression not



Musical mistakes: *Martin Guerre*'s unnamed disabled character

far removed from *Crossroads'* Benny); social marginalisation (being pushed out of the action) and ridicule of his disability (having his crutch kicked from under him) – all your old favourites are here.

Possibly the most offensive example is the object of his emotional desires – a scarecrow. It just confirms it, doesn't it – us cripples are incapable of forming a "normal relationship".

I'm not a big fan of the genre, but I did find *Martin Guerre* impressive musically. There lies its greatest flaw: you could easily obtain the same gratification from the cd. With no dialogue, plot is eradicated. Buy the cd if you must. That way you won't be subjected to another barrage of anti-disability mass produced bilge. Avoid.

Dan Batten



I'm sick of saying it, but drama is the biggest and most powerful key to correct social attitudes and behaviour towards disabled people. When drama consistently gets it right society may begin to learn. Sadly, there are still new one-off tv films that reinforce negative perceptions of disability.

On two consecutive Sundays, ITV offered *The English Wife* (4 August) and *Some Kind of Life* (11 August). In the first, an English woman is employed to care for the autistic son of a French couple. It is inferred that the boy is not really loved by his parents and gains more affection from his "minder".

With increased affection, his autism decreases until he can speak a little and is no longer so introspective. I don't know much about autism but I was not aware that such a dramatic change can occur just through love.

In *Some Kind of Life*, a biker has an accident leaving him brain damaged. His symptoms are initially total, giving rise to enormous trauma. In time he walks and talks, but not coherently, and is prone to "irrational" behaviour.

His wife tries to stay with him, champions his cause, almost falls for her husband's best friend, and eventually disappears over the horizon with her son, leaving the audience in the air as to whether she will return.

I'm not pretending that brain injury is easy to deal with, but this kind of drama does not encourage a more constructive perspective among its audience. All it does is infer that if your nearest and dearest is suddenly made disabled and you can't handle it, it's perfectly legitimate to back off, because disability is such a tragedy.

When dramas shows that selfish attitudes like this are the real culprits, the picture will become more accurate.

Esther Rantzen began a short series, *The Rantzen Report* (5 August), with an investigation of ME. In order to establish that the medical profession, which denies the existence of ME, is wrong, she spoke to the doctor who is medical correspondent for *The Times*.

She then turned to a studio audience of people with ME to challenge that view. Surely a reverse procedure would have been better, which would have set up in viewers' minds that ME does exist, before highlighting the doubters.

Film

Michael Turner



It's 15 years since the National Film Theatre ran a season on disability, so the short season called "Breaks Out" (8-10 September) is long overdue. Much has changed since that first season, and this new venture showcases the work of

a new generation of disabled film and video makers.

"Disabled film makers have started to take control of the way disability is portrayed in the moving image media," comments season organiser and former *DN* film critic Andy Kimpton-Nye.

"This event celebrates the trend in disability-led film/video projects which tell the real truth about disabled lives and counter all the dubious imagery elsewhere in the media".

Most of the season is video-

based. Highlights include actor Nabil Shaban's directorial debut with *A Different World*. This is based on what it says are the large numbers of disabled people who have had supernatural experiences.

It looks good and has a suitably eerie atmosphere, but it's not entirely clear what Shaban makes of the subject.

Video and film are different, and there are things that can and can't be done in both mediums.

Jenni Meredith's *Through the Pain* video shows her superb grasp of the medium, blending photographic and animated imagery with on-screen text to create a kaleidoscopic exploration of disability. Despite the off-putting title, it describes disability in a way not possible in any other medium.

Equally striking is photographer David Hevey's

Freak Out, made for the BBC's Disability Programme Unit in 1993. It's a perfect marriage of style and content that shows his grasp of a new medium.

Tel: 0171-928 3232

Video top five

1. **SEVEN** (EV): Blond bombshell Brad Pitt faces deadly sins.

2. **BABE** (CIC): A talking pig brings home the bacon.

3. **DANGEROUS MINDS** (Hollywood): Schoolroom drama.

4. **ACE VENTURA: WHEN NATURE CALLS** (Warner): Jim Carrey goes wild in the jungle.

5. **LOCH NESS** (Polygram): Cheery monster tale.

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Smooth Ride Guides: United States Eastern Seaboard
£14.99, FT Publishing

Full of good intentions and pretty pictures, this is the second in a series described by the publishers as "indispensable for the disabled". Well, okay, there is information on accessible attractions and transport and listings of accessible hotels (not nearly enough), specialist tour operators, support organisations and other resources. These are all helpful when planning a trip, and it is nice to have it all under one roof.

But for me the guide fails on two counts. First, the niggling inaccuracies, inconsistencies and omissions. Why is El Al included while American Airlines is left out? The addresses of RADAR, Mobility International, Mobility International USA and others are years out of date.

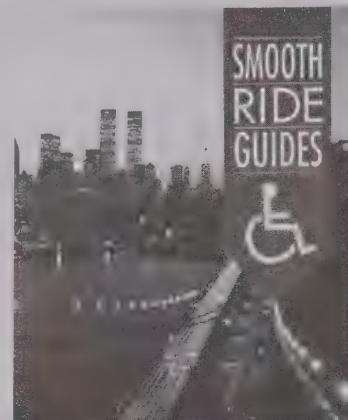
Some contact addresses are annotated but many others are not. What could I expect from contacting the FPT Travel Management Group? How can Ability Solutions help me plan a trip to the US? And who the hell are Hospital Audiences, Inc?

Under Insurance there are two entries – Derek Ketteridge and Leisurecare – with no explanation. The latter supplies policies for disabled travellers but Ketteridge is an insurance broker offering standard travel insurance for anyone.

The second failing is the price.

This book cannot replace a standard travel guide: its general information is thin and reads like a brochure, with none of the authority of a mainstream series like *Rough Guides*.

If disabled travellers must buy a separate guide for access information, the price must be right. Despite the fact that the research was carried out by questionnaire rather than



UNITED STATES EASTERN SEABOARD

FREEWHEELING MADE EASY

inspection, the 384-page *Smooth Ride Guide* costs a whopping £14.99 – the same price as the 1,100 page *Rough Guide to the USA*, and, incidentally, only £1 cheaper than *Fodor's Great American Vacations for Travelers with Disabilities*, which, although published in 1994, is still useful and comprehensive, containing information for people with different kinds of disabilities.

Alison Walsh

Disability Politics
By Jane Campbell and Mike Oliver
£11.99, Routledge

Jane Campbell and Mike Oliver set out to relate the history of the disability movement and to forecast its future.

What they actually give us is the history of the British Council of Disabled People (BCODP) from an insider's viewpoint. The story is told in the words of the people who built the BCODP and it is their vision of what the movement is and should be. There is little here from outside the organisation, which is a pity. If the BCODP speaks for the majority of disabled people, any critique of it must include the views of outsiders.

It is not that there is no criticism in the book. The People First group, for instance, say some very interesting things about the exclusion of people with learning difficulties.

The book is more accessible than a lot of works that have come out of the disability movement. The problem I have with it is the narrow definition. The disability movement has done great service to all disabled people over the last decade. The BCODP has played a big part, but it is not the whole story.

The future of the movement will depend on its relevance to the lives of ordinary disabled people. The contribution of the BCODP so far has been to



The Road to Glory: portraits of Britain's Paralympians by Richard and Fiona Bailey contains stunning photographs of our top disabled sportspeople like Margaret Biggs (above). £25 from Quiller Press.

emphasise issues like independent living, personal assistance and anti-discrimination legislation.

These issues are important but in one sense they are narrow ones that only apply to disabled people as disabled people.

If inclusion means anything, the movement must embrace all

issues that disabled people are interested in. This means being part of the wider political spectrum. I get a sense from this book and from other debates going on that it is coming. I hope, for the sake of the movement and for disabled people, that it continues.

Glyn Vernon

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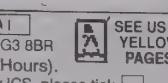
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Volunteers find a step on the ladder

The Prince's Trust Volunteers gives young people a 12-week course which teaches confidence, motivation and life skills – and helps them find work. Helen Gregory talks to two volunteers.



Positive: Warren Kingston with his course mates

Warren Kingston found canoeing, abseiling and clearing out a pond gave him confidence and a new, positive attitude.

The 27-year-old remembers how his 12-week course as a volunteer was "great fun" and put a new perspective on his disability.

A wheelchair user from Ringmer in Sussex, he went to Wales for an activity week as a Prince's Trust volunteer. He believes it gave each of his ten team members a lesson in teamwork.

"They helped me get to certain places which made us learn co-operation and helped us all become stronger."

Warren used to work as a civil servant, but found he was becoming too stressed. He eventually had to give up his job.

"Before I went on the course, I would sometimes say, 'I can't do that because...', and find an excuse. But the team soon got tired of my attitude and I started having a go and finding I could do these things. It changed my perspective of my disability."

Warren helped organise a community project to clear silt from a pond at St Pier's School for children with severe learning disabilities in Lingfield, Surrey. It helped him understand organisation and teamwork.

His four-week individual work experience placement was with a British Gas team which visited disabled and elderly people, advising them on mobility products, such as

specially designed plugs.

"I really enjoyed doing that as it gave me an insight into how a utility company worked and how it helped people, which an outsider wouldn't know about."

As a result of his new-found confidence, Warren has now become chairman of his local PHAB (Physically Disabled and Able Bodied) group and is also vice chairman of the

Sussex branch of the association, which promotes integration. He also does voluntary youth work.

"I learnt a great deal from the course, and I'm still in touch with the people I did it with – some of them are now my best friends."

Meanwhile, in Bristol, David Ellington, 24, works as a housing surveyor for the city council.

He is profoundly deaf and was previously unemployed, but got the job after becoming a volunteer with the Trust.

He now inspects empty properties which need to be repaired before the tenant is rehoused.

He undertakes environmental improvement projects and helps meet requests from disabled tenants.

David believes his time on the Trust greatly improved his career prospects. "It only took me a month to find the job."

"Before, I had been unemployed and had tried unsuccessfully for permanent work several times. In that time I had only done two odd temporary jobs."

He thought the course sounded brilliant as he likes to take part in outdoor activities



Team building: volunteers take part in a one-week course

and thought it would be a good chance to gain new skills.

During his 12 weeks David



New job: David Ellington

spent time in Cornwall, windsurfing and rock-climbing during his activity week and did work experience with Age Concern where he helped set up a new computer system.

He also helped dredge a pond

for a city farm.

"I found the adventure week fascinating as it helped me to communicate easily with other hearing volunteers and understand about my identity. It was very enjoyable."

"The scheme bought me back into the world."

Team leader Richard Ward said David was the first person he had trained with a disability and that the experience had helped everyone.

"The other team members found it quite hard at first, but we all soon learned to use finger spelling, and a bit of sign language too."

"We learnt a lot from him, and by the end of the course, everyone was very 'pro-David'."

Prince's Trust Volunteers, tel: (0800) 842842



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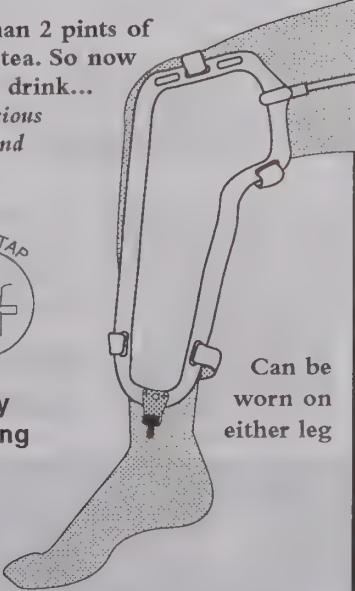


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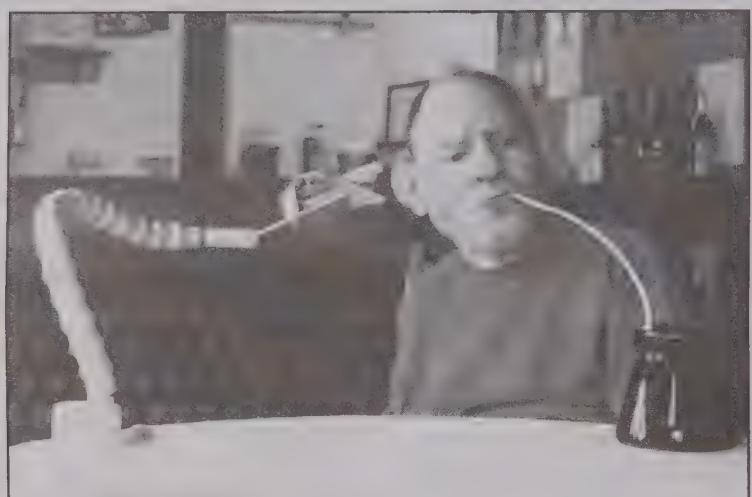
The DN team will be on stand 197, handing out free copies and hoping to meet the readers. Do come join us!

This year's Naidex at Wembley is a truly worldwide event, with countries such as Sweden, Denmark, Germany and the USA represented among the 250 exhibitors.

There are plenty of new things to see. The Danish Show Home, in hall three, gives visitors the chance to test out products in a specially built home environment.

Lots of companies are choosing the exhibition to launch new products.

Electric Mobility (stand 161) will be showcasing the Euro Scooter and its new Rascal Beaver 8mph four wheeled scooter, an update of the Rascal Otter, in the new '97 colours.



Michaelis Engineering's Neater Snacker and Neater Drinker

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naidex 96

Hannah Crabtree checks out what's new at Naidex International

Wessex Medical (stand 303) is launching the Steplift. Developed to improve access to the home, it can take up to 160kg in weight.

Daedalus Technologies (stand 976), is introducing their DaeSSy Stem-System, a quick release mount for a switch or an environmental control that fits on to a wheelchair.

Also of interest for people with limited arm and head movement is the Neater Snacker, from Michaelis Engineering (stand 315), a long arm on the end of a fold-away clamp holds it to a table to make eating easier.

If you're looking for bathroom equipment, ESL Healthcare (stand 141) will be showing its new Agenda



Lots to see and do at this year's Naidex International at Wembley

shower tray. Available as a level access tray or with a ramp, it has a grip assisted deck pattern for added safety.

Coopers Healthcare (stand 58) is exhibiting the Merlin Bathlifter, which provides a stable platform to get in and out of the bath.

If you're looking for something for the kids, why not enter WRK's (stand 190) Prize Draw and win a Supa Bike.

With so much new technology

on show, good advice can be worth its weight in gold. The Computability Centre (stand 98) will be providing a free advice service and the Charity Information Centre, hall three and the Mobility Information Point, hall one, will also be on hand to offer help.

There is a free seminar programme running throughout the show, including topics such as rehabilitation through integration, arthritic

care and outdoor activity holidays and courses.

An Association Conference Programme will also be running, covering topical issues affecting the disability industry. There is a small cost for places, which need to be booked in advance.

After you've seen all that's on offer, you can decide who you think should win the New Product Showcase (stand 181b). See if your favourites match the judges, who announce the winner on the final day.

Opening times

Tuesday 24 September
10am-5pm.

Wednesday 25 September
10am-6.30pm.

Thursday 26 September
10am-4pm.

Travel information

A courtesy bus for disabled people will operate between Euston Bus Station, Kings Cross and Wembley Exhibition Centre — it leaves Euston at 9.45am and 11.45am and returns from Wembley at 2.30pm and 4.30pm and 6.30pm on Wednesday.

A courtesy shuttle bus service operates from 8.30am-6pm daily between Wembley Park Underground Station and the exhibition centre. The centre is in zone four on the underground.

Buses: 83, 92 and 182 run to Wembley Arena.

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You've got the power

Doreen Russell, from Bungay in Suffolk, found looking after her mother's finances meant a lot of shopping around

"The power of what?" The salesgirl's voice seemed very loud. I sensed other customers looking in my direction.

I started to explain that I had power of attorney to sign cheques on my mother's account so that I could shop for her, as she was now unable to do so.

I offered the salesgirl the legal papers signed by my mother – Adelene Fogarty – and myself, as well as my mother's solicitor and an independent witness, plus a letter of acceptance from her bank.

Without a glance at them she said she could not accept payment by this method as, "I'd lose my job if the cheque bounced." By this time the entire department was riveted by my predicament and I was wishing I had the power to become invisible.

I had been advised that, as my mother, who has arthritis and is in a wheelchair, was no longer able to handle her monetary affairs, I should apply for power of attorney through her solicitor. My mother was able to give her consent to this and signed the documents.

A spell of respite care for mother meant I could shop more easily for clothes and shoes for her. I wanted to pay with her cheque book so that it was quite clear what the cheques were used for.

I approached the second store, Clarks Shoe Shop, with trepidation. However the salesgirl could not have been more considerate, quietly reading the documents and then accepting the cheque.

Later I phoned several large stores and explained the situation. Most were clearly suspicious. One insisted on phoning back, another said it would depend on the cost of the goods. One store said it would require a handwritten letter from my mother. Why then had we paid a solicitor for a legal document?

Although my mother can just about sign her name, writing a letter is beyond her.

Top marks to Marks and Spencer who gave me a named person to ask for when I had



Mother: Adelene Fogarty

finished shopping who came with me to the sales desk to endorse the cheque. A little long-winded but the transactions were completed with discretion and courtesy.

Life can be difficult enough for disabled people and their carers. The responsibility to handle another's affairs can at times be daunting. Surely it is possible for stores to educate staff to understand powers of attorney so they can behave with sensitivity.

It would be wonderful if the business world could be educated to understand that disabled people and their carers, even though their lives are often restricted, do have one power the same as everybody else – the power to take their money elsewhere."

• Age Concern publishes a fact sheet, *Legal Arrangements for Managing Financial Affairs*, tel: 0181-679 8000, and the Public Trust Office publishes a booklet called *Enduring Powers of Attorney*, tel: 0171-269 7000.



Shopping can be less stressful if someone else has control of the purse strings

HELP THE AGED

Legal rules to make your life easier

An Enduring Power of Attorney gives a relative or carer the right to act on someone's behalf if that person is physically or mentally unable to manage their own affairs.

It is a legal document which must be signed while the donor can understand exactly what it means.

An Enduring Power of Attorney (Prescribed Form) Regulations 1990 (EPA) can be bought from a law stationer or prepared by a solicitor.

Anyone can be a donor if they are over 18 and can understand what it means. An attorney

(who acts on their behalf) must be over 18 and solvent.

If the donor starts to become "mentally incapacitated", the attorney then has to apply to the Public Trust Office to have the EPA registered. Then, the attorney can make binding decisions about the donor's property.

He or she only has to show the EPA to banks, building societies or shops, to prove their authority to act on the donor's behalf.

Solicitor Helen Godson, of David Levene & Co, said more people were now applying for

the enduring power.

"It is a process which is understood by banks and insurance companies, but there is still a lack of education about it in shops," she said. "They might be frightened by the wording."

Ms Godson suggested the donor could also arrange a mandate from their bank, which would give the carer the right to sign cheques on their behalf.

"You could even open a fresh account for transactions, or make a bank transfer and write your own personal cheques on the donor's behalf."

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Try before you buy: DLF information officer Evelyn Herlihy shows Dan Batten how to adjust this bed

Julie O'Keeffe explains how to find the best bed for you

Beds and their accessories are the grey area of statutory provision. If they are regarded as home nursing equipment, then the community nurse is responsible.

But if they are daily living equipment which helps to make you more independent, then you may have to buy the bed, at least, yourself.

Provision tends to be patchy and will vary from area to area. Some of the more complex and expensive beds can be hired for a weekly fee – useful if the bed is needed for a short time or you want to try it out before buying.

When you buy, it is essential to choose the right one because mistakes are costly and cannot easily be rectified.

It may be possible to obtain charitable funding for part or all of the cost of a bed. Contact the Disabled Living Foundation (DLF) for details.

Beware of "orthopaedic" beds

Most manufacturers of standard domestic beds and mattresses that are used with special beds make firm mattresses which they call "orthopaedic". But there is no national standard controlling what constitutes an orthopaedic bed. The term simply describes the firmest bed in that manufacturer's range.

Firm beds are good if you have to spend a lot of time in bed or have persistent back trouble. But firm does not necessarily mean hard. As long as the mattress core is supportive, the outer layers can be soft.

Variable posture and height adjustable beds

These beds enable multiple adjustments to your position. You may need this for comfort,

No more

When choosing a special bed...

- Check that a simpler, cheaper piece of equipment that does the same job is not available. You may be able to borrow a lifting pole or mattress variator from your social services department. An occupational therapist may be able to help.
- Try the bed before you buy. Lie on it for at least ten minutes and try different types. The Disabled Living Foundation (DLF) gives advice on equipment and has a display of beds that can be tried out. Tel: 0171-289 6111.
- The National Bed Federation (NBF) produces fact sheets on how to choose the right bed. Find out if the manufacturer is a member as they are also a trade association.
- Your local disabled living centre will have a range of equipment on display that can be tested. Disabled Living Centres Council (DLCC), tel: 0171-820 0567.
- The National Back Pain Association has information and advice. Tel: 0181-977 5474.
- Find out if the manufacturer complies with the BSTA (formerly known as the British Surgical Trades Association) code of practice called *Rehabilitation Products*. Tel: (01732) 458868.
- Always take out a service agreement with the manufacturer of any bed with powered components. Other suppliers may not have access to spare parts.
- If possible, do not buy second hand.
- Beds and mattresses do not last forever. Check with the manufacturer what the life expectancy is.

support while sitting, to provide pressure relief or to improve mobility in bed – getting in and out or moving from lying to sitting.

Variable posture beds have a mattress base which is divided into three, four or five sections.

These can be adjusted to change the bed's shape or "profile". They can be operated by handheld controls so you can change your own position.

Manually operated beds controlled by a foot pump, lever or winding mechanism, or



In control: Dan tries out the handheld switch for himself

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sleepless nights

a ratchet system can be hard work for the carer.

Variable posture beds can also be height adjusted either manually or automatically so the carer does not need to stoop and bend. It also allows you to adjust the height so that you can get on and off more easily.

Variable posture beds with three sections form a "knee break" - so when you sit up, your knees are supported and you don't slip down the bed. The trouble is your bottom gets squashed in the acute angle.

A four section bed is more comfortable and stable as your bottom stays horizontal (on an immobile section) while your knees are raised. Five section beds give more profiling in the head/backrest section.

The mattresses for these beds should have hinged divisions that correspond with moving sections of the base. Always test before you buy as your body may not hinge in the same place as the mattress!

If two people are sharing a double bed they may not want to change their position at the same time or in the same way. So linked beds let people sleep together yet adjust their side according to their own requirements.

The National Bed Federation (NBF) has details of all these beds.

Variable posture beds

Bakare Beds, tel: (01752) 342222, Design Strength, tel: 0181-925 4477, Fullers Medical Products, tel: (01424) 426094, Scan Mobility, tel: (01704) 534483, Sleepermatic, tel: 0181-959 2232, Theraposture, tel: (01985) 847788

Height adjustable beds

Aidserv, tel: (01257) 425538, Days Medical Aids, tel: (01656) 657495, Masterpeace, tel: 0161-678 2998, Shackletons, tel: (01924) 474430, James Spencer and Co, tel: (01535) 272957. The last four also supply variable posture beds.

Sit up beds

Sit up beds have two sections, so cannot be profiled. But the angle of the head section can be adjusted to form a backrest. A hinged mattress should be used to maximise the profile; a conventional mattress would be damaged.

Hinged mattresses do not angle under the knees so you sit with your legs extended. This can result in you sliding down the bed.



Perfect posture: some adjustable beds have sections which can be raised and lowered to suit you

Sit up beds

Sidhil Care, tel: (01422) 363447, Gallops Hospital Equipment, tel: (01323) 646681, HNE Nesbit Evans, tel: 0121-556 1511, Nopac Health Care Services, tel: (01708) 688695, Sliding Mirror Door Co, tel: (01527) 69548

Chair beds

With a chair bed you don't have to transfer from chair to bed or vice versa.

Some are adjustable beds

which can be electrically profiled so you can sit up. Others are primarily chairs that can be reclined fully so that you can lie horizontally. If a bed is electrically powered and controlled by a handset, you may be able to operate it independently. But some of the chair types are manually operated and may need a carer to recline the backrest with a lever and pull out the leg rest.

Chair beds

High Seat, tel: (01924) 464809,

HNE Community Care, Knightsbridge Furniture Productions, tel: (01274) 731442

Reclining chairs

AJ Way, tel: (01494) 471821, Everstyl, tel: 0181-760 5178, Helping Hand Co, tel: (01531) 635678

Anti-allergenic beds

Allergies, especially breathing and skin conditions, can be aggravated in bed because of close contact with materials or

creatures like wool and bed bugs.

But more manufacturers are now catering for these problems and providing mattresses in non-allergenic materials, or ones incorporating a special barrier fabric. Special covers can be bought for bed pillows and sprays used to protect the mattress. If all else fails, you could try a water bed.

Details from The National Eczema Society, tel: 0171-388 4097 and the National Asthma Campaign, tel: (0345) 010203

Anti-allergenic beds

Healthy House, tel: (01453) 752216, British Waterbed Company, tel: (01395) 270066

Waterproof mattresses and bedding

Some waterproof mattresses are available for people with continence problems, but the material may cause sweating and be uncomfortable to sleep on. Waterproof bedding is also available for standard mattresses.

Details from the Continence Foundation, tel: 0171-213 0050

Waterproof mattresses and bedding

Briman Contracts, tel: 0181-908 0102, Comfortably Yours, tel: 0161-236 9911, Wellcross Healthcare, tel: (01733) 211500

Julie O'Keeffe is deputy head of data services at the DLF

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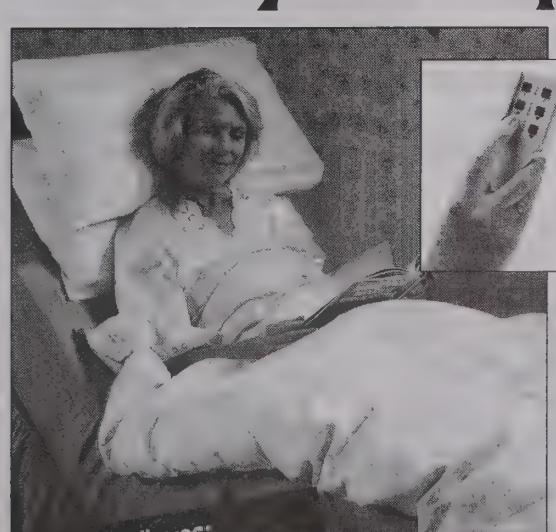


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Dear Ann

Send your letters to: Ann Darnbrough, Disability Now, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ

I need to make my life a little sweeter

Time is running out for me and before it is too late I want to do something spectacular. I have a muscle wasting condition and while I am not too disabled to lead a reasonably active life, I fear that within the next five to ten years I may find myself needing the constant assistance of a carer.

I am fortunate to be working, but I don't want to waste precious time sitting behind a desk.

The truth is that I don't know what I want to do, but I don't just want to sit around and wait for the inevitable. Should I choose to travel around the world overland, drive a food lorry in some starving region of Africa, try a parachute jump, have a last meaningful relationship or write a book?

I have children that might inherit my condition and I want to set them an example to show that life is what you make of it.

Do you know of any societies for people in my predicament? I would also like to hear from like-minded readers so we could encourage each other to

make the most of life while we are able.

Norris, Bedford

I am sure we have all fantasised from time to time of great adventures we would like to undertake. If it's travel you're after, then try Trailfinders - the holiday firm is great on adventurous travelling, whether you want to go with a group or prefer to choose your own pattern of travelling. Either way, it can provide information and arrange whatever travelling and accommodation you may specify. A visit to the offices is an adventure in itself.

The firm has interesting books for sale which, at the very least, gives the armchair traveller a good opportunity to explore distant places.

Have you thought of applying to volunteer abroad? Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) welcomes disabled volunteers. They go through the same selection process as everyone else and may be posted anywhere in the developing world for two years. All volunteers must have professional skills. Apart from

- love and loneliness
- bereavement
- personal problems
- advice and support

A UNIQUE SERVICE!

DN's telephone counsellor Lin Berwick can give disabled people and carers advice and support on personal and spiritual problems. Disabled herself, Lin is a psycho-therapeutic counsellor and fully accredited Methodist local preacher. Talk to her on (01708) 477582 on Thursday afternoons, 1pm-5pm and Mondays 6pm-10pm.



Sponsored by BT

writing to them all soon. As I have discovered, help arrives from the most unexpected sources.

Jessica, Burnley

It was wonderful to hear from you again, and to learn of your progress. I am glad to hear that the surgery has been such a success. I am sure your new studies will go a long way to beating your depression and to helping you back into the real world again.

If you have any physical difficulties at college, do contact SKILL, The National Bureau for Students with Disabilities. They have a fund of knowledge about facilities at colleges and about entitlements for disabled students.

Being the survivor that you are I am sure you will go on battling against an acceptance of limitations as you see them. It seems to me that while survival is certainly about facing reality, it's how you define reality that counts.

We each of us can always do so much more than we may think we can, disabled or not.

Trailfinders, 42-50 Earls Court Road, London W8 6EJ, tel: long haul flights 0171-938 3366

Voluntary Service Overseas, 317 Putney Bridge Road, London SW15 2PG, tel: 0181-780 2266

SKILL, 336 Bridge Road, London SW9 7AA, tel: 0171-274 0565

that, potential volunteers with a disability have the opportunity to state whether they need any particular consideration.

Every potential volunteer, disabled or able bodied, has to have clearance from their GP to confirm they could tolerate climatic and other challenges. Volunteers are paid at the local rate for the job, and have all expenses met.

Since 'meaningful relationships' tend to turn up when they are least expected, I wouldn't consider programming that into a particular agenda. And as for writing a book, why not wait until you have carried out all these exciting exploits? . . .

Many severely disabled people have done lots of exciting things, so try not to put a lid on your ambition.

I always enjoy hearing from readers to learn how they are getting on.

I was delighted to have a letter from Jessica, who, when she wrote in May, described the horrendous loneliness she was suffering while her partner was at work, and her frustration at not being able to discuss her feeling with her family. She is now feeling better able to cope.

Readers' letters lift me from despair

I feel I must be experiencing what many of your readers will have experienced for themselves, and that is the complete

lack of liaison and/or communication between consultants. Plus, whatever you tell them over and over again is either misinterpreted or ignored.

Well-meaning therapists of the various disciplines seem totally to disregard the fact that a lot of us have a life and family outside hospital and that sometimes too much care can have a detrimental effect.

The good news is that the surgery I have just had has given me the feeling back in my hands and legs. I can now walk a little and with continued physiotherapy this could improve further.

Even better news is that I have a definite place at the University of Central Lancashire to study psychology and women's health. I can't wait to get started. I'm hoping with all my heart it will help to lift the depression and feelings of isolation that sparked off my original letter to you.

I am currently at a Rehab Centre in Burnley. I've only been here a week and feel very unsettled. It is almost as though I am being taught to be "disabled" and I have kept battling with the staff against letting myself accept this as, if I do, then I feel I will have lost everything.

The letters from readers you passed on to me have been of such enormous help, I am indebted to you. I have struggled to reply but this has been difficult because of hospitalisation, but I will be



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Your stars

By DN's astrologer Marion Stanton



VIRGO (24 August-23 Sept)

If you are hoping to influence a female relative, save it until mid month. This is a good time to strike while the iron is hot if you are want a new start.

LIBRA (24 Sept-23 October)

There could be a lot of uncertainty early this month. If you think you're losing your marbles, let it all roll around for a while. Your vision will clear with time.

SCORPIO (24 Oct-22 Nov)

It may seem as if the crunch is coming in a relationship. There's no need to fly off the handle although you might feel like doing just that. In a couple of months it won't be an issue.

SAGITTARIUS (23 Nov-21 Dec)

You may experience a threat to your ego this month. Listen well and choose words carefully. Don't let temporary upsets interfere with long-term plans.

CAPRICORN (22 Dec-20 Jan)

Your love life could be simpler. Make the most of it. Capricorns are always practical but you have long been trying to reconcile this with your dreams. Maybe they can come true.

AQUARIUS (21 Jan-19 Feb)

An argument might be brewing on the domestic front. Even if you believe you are in the right, consider whether it is worth the consequences.

PISCES (20 Feb-20 March)

The heat is on again. Some fast talking might be required, but you should be rested enough to take on the challenge. Concentrate on affairs of the head rather than the heart.

ARIES (21 March-20 April)

If you can slow down you might be able to carry your loved ones along with your plans. Otherwise, they might feel left out in the cold.

TAURUS (21 April-21 May)

Tensions arise and arguments follow if you don't keep a lid on your temper. Leave your loved ones alone. If you love them, you and they will come around.

GEMINI (22 May-22 June)

Don't try to talk your way out of tight corners this month. Better to be honest about your shortcomings and be willing to let bygones be bygones.

CANCER (23 June-23 July)

This is a time for relaxation. While others strive to win pots of gold you would do well to lay low and wait for opportunities to unfold naturally.

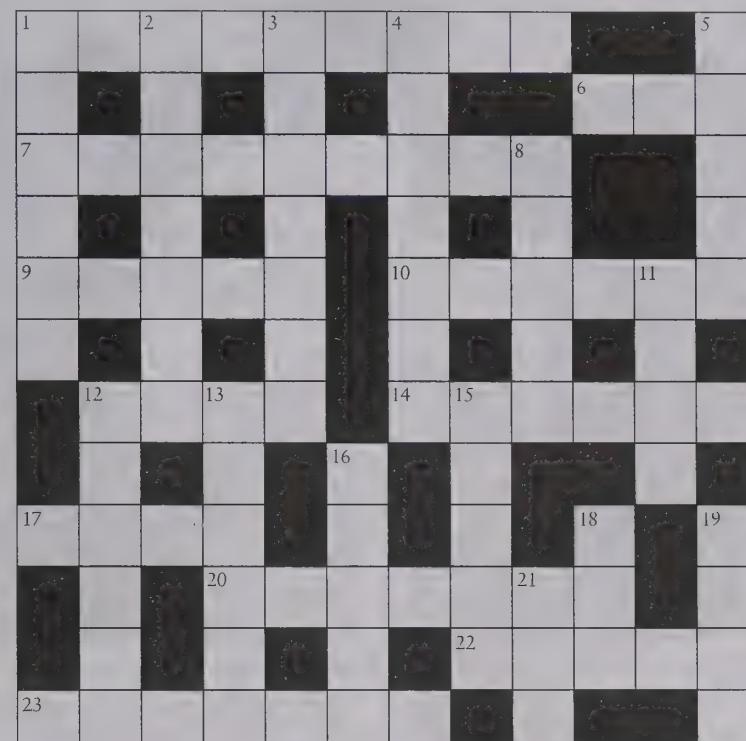
LEO (24 July-23 August)

Ardent Leos get an opportunity to show what they're made of but avoid crossing swords if you can. What you desire could be there for the taking.

DN's crossword

Answers on page 33

COMPILED BY REBECCA REYNOLDS



ACROSS

- Disability transport services (4-1-4)
- Chinese or English drink? (3)
- Small blood vessel (9)
- Peripheral (5)
- Moved very slowly (6)
- Extremely (4)
- Indigenous (6)
- Slang for strike-breaker (4)
- Canine place? (7)
- __ of the trade (5)
- Male relative (7)

DOWN

- Medic (6)
- Mute ape (anag)
- Physical reaction to pollen (7)
- In a tail (anag)
- Tiled (of a floor) (5)
- Boat (5)
- Jealousy (4)
- Champion (6)
- Small, fast mammal (5)
- Scope or extent (5)
- Large, fast mammal (5)
- Many years __ (3)
- Foundation or bottom (4)
- It's as good as a wink (3)

Trivia teasers

Answers on page 33

- What is the longest French river?
- Who was British Prime Minister from 1970-1974?
- Which city burned in *Gone with the Wind*?
- A Spanish omelette and a Mexican pancake share what name?
- What is a badger's home called?
- Which comedians present *Fantasy Football League*?
- Which is the deepest Scottish lake?
- Ophelia is a character in which Shakespeare play?
- In the natural world, what is a Red Admiral?
- What colour sari is traditionally worn by an Indian bride?

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The Raynaud's & Scleroderma Association provides heating aids leaflets which give details on equipment for keeping warm. For your copies, send a stamped addressed envelope to: Mrs Anne Mawdsley, The Raynaud's & Scleroderma Association, 112/114 Crewe Road, Alsager, Cheshire, ST7 2JA, tel: (01270) 872776.

ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service), has published a revised edition of

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The Employment Handbook. Its section on equal opportunities has been expanded to cover the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act. £3 incl p&p from: ACAS Reader Ltd, PO Box 16, Earl Shilton, Leicestershire LE9 8ZZ.

Heathrow Airport offers a free cassette version of *Heathrow's Travellers Information - Special Needs Edition*, a guide to using the airport with a minimum of difficulty. Tel: (01233) 211207.

Creative Labs are offering a free *Guide to Working from Home*, which provides useful advice and information. Send your name and address on a postcard to: Insight UK, Freepost, Chelmsford, CM2 0ZZ.

The Lee Valley Park Countryside Service has recently opened a new half-mile Sensory Trail at Waltham Abbey, Essex. Historical features and artworks can be seen, touched and listened to along the route. Contact the Lee Valley Park Countryside Centre, Abbey Gardens, Waltham Abbey, Essex EN9 1XQ.

The Mary Rose Exhibition in Portsmouth has launched a new audio guide for visually impaired visitors. For more information contact: The Mary Rose Trust, College Road, HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LX, tel: (01705) 750521.

The National Trust's Dunwich Heath now has a "caddy car" capable of taking up to three passengers around the heath. For details contact: The Warden, Coastguard Cottages, Dunwich Heath, Saxmundham, Suffolk IP17 3DJ, tel: (01728) 648505.

A sporting chance

Cerebral Palsy Sport is looking for people to join its 12-18 football squad for an international competition next year. Soccer will be just one of the events on offer at the CP-ISRA World Games. Football training sessions will be held in a different region every month from September. Interested? Contact: Shirley Hughes on tel: 0115-940 1202.

Wealden District Council has produced a new tourist guide for people with disabilities. It includes information on accommodation, transport and leisure facilities. Contact: Wealden District Council, Council Offices, Pine Grove, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1DH, tel: (01892) 653311, minicom: (01323) 443331.

The Family Welfare Association has produced a new *Guide to Social Services*. Contact: Waterlow Information Services, Paulton House, 8 Shepherdess Walk, London N1 7LB, tel: 0171-490 0049.

Help

Do you want to share your innermost secrets? The BBC's *Bookworm* returns to BBC1 this autumn and they're on the lookout for the UK's unknown authors who keep a daily diary. If you're interested, send a sample week of your journal to: The Bookworm, Room E304, BBC Television Centre, London W12 7RJ.

Would you like to help with a study day for occupational therapists? North East Thames Regional Group of OTs are organising one and would like the input of users of OT services. If you can help, please contact: Sylvia Watson, Occupational Therapy Department, Social Services, Willowfield House, Tendring Road, Harlow, Essex, tel: (01279) 434641 ext 38474.



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Due to the summer break, DN's interview with Minister for Disabled People Alastair Burt will be appearing in the autumn.

What's on

Conference on Disability and Society: ten years on on 4-6 September at the Ashford International Hotel, Kent. A number of bursaries for disabled people have been provided by CARFAX, the publisher of the journal. For details contact: Mrs Val Stokes, Division of Education, University of Sheffield, 388 Glossop Road, Sheffield, S10 2JA.

Half-day debate on the Christian Ministry of Healing: do disabled people want it? on 7 September at The Epicentre, Leytonstone, London. Contact: Rosemary Power, CREST Waltham Forest, Unit 1, The Mews, 2A Truro Road, Walthamstow, London E17 7BY, tel: 0181-521 2971.

Conference on family based short term care for disabled children and adults on 12 September in Oadby, Leicester. For a booking form and full conference information contact Anne Williams, Shared Care UK, The Norah Fry Research Centre, 3 Priory Road, Bristol BS8 1TX, tel: 0117-923 8137.

Open Day for the Croxley Project, a specialist resource providing social contact opportunities for people with learning difficulties, on 12 September in Westminster. For further information, contact Charlotte Parkinson on 0181-960 2848.

Conference for people with disabilities organised by Basildon District Council on 14 September at the George Hurd Centre in Basildon. Contact Ray Stephenson on (01268) 293349.

TRIVIA TEASERS

1. Loire
2. Edward Heath
3. Atlanta
4. Tortilla
5. A set
6. Frank Skinner and David Baddeil
7. Loch Morar
8. Hamlet
9. A type of butterfly
10. Red

Artyfacts

Patient: the true story of rare illness is by Ben Watt, half of pop band Everything But the Girl. It tells how he came close to death with a very unusual stomach disease. £12.50, David Godwin Associates. Available from bookshops.

The Connections charity is running a one-year course for disabled women who want to work in television, beginning April 1997. For details contact: Connections, Palingswick House, 241 King Street, Hammersmith, London W6 9LP, tel: 0181-741 1766.

The Royal National Theatre has produced a booklet about its services for disabled people. Contact: Royal National Theatre, South Bank, London SE1 9PX, tel: 0171-928 2033.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS: 1. Dial-a-ride
6. Tea 7. Capillary 9. Outer
10. Inched 12. Very
14. Native 17. Scab 20. Barking
22. Tools 23. Brother
DOWN: 1. Doctor
2. Amputee 3. Allergy
4. Italian 5. Paved 8. Yacht
11. Envy 12. Victor 13. Rabbit
15. Ambit 16. Horse
18. Ago 19. Base 21. Nod



Edinburgh artist (above centre) Jim Gaitens and members of the Wheels and Sticks club have created stained glass murals for the city's Gilmerton Library. The murals depict the rich social history of the area.

DEAF AND DISABLED PEOPLE – TOWARDS A NEW UNDERSTANDING

A conference to be held on 7th and 8th December 1996

Venue – London Voluntary Sector Resource Centre

This conference, which is being jointly planned by the Policy Studies Institute (PSI) and the Alliance of Deaf Service Users and Providers (ADSUP), aims to:

- bring together and explore a range of perspectives on social policy from deaf and disabled people;
- examine a range of viewpoints on contradictions and tensions between these perspectives, and approaches to their resolution;
- develop an understanding of deafness and disability within a wider equalities framework;
- collaboratively and constructively explore ways of developing empowering social policies on deafness and disability.

Speakers and workshop facilitators who have been invited to participate in the conference include: Colin Barnes, Rachel Bastikar-O'Neill, Nasa Begum, Jane Campbell, Mairian Corker, Frances Elton, Kavita Kohli, John Ley, Geraldine O'Halloran, Jill Jones, Mike Oliver and Ayesha Vernon.

For further information and booking details, please contact:

Adam Berthoud
Policy Studies Institute
100 Park Village East
London NW1 3SR

Telephone: 0171 468 2279
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Email: aberthoud@psi.org.uk

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Personal

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DAVID, 55, 5FT 7IN. Divorced, honest, caring. I have osteo-arthritis which slows me down a little. Would like to meet a lady in her mid 30s to mid 50s who needs love and affection and is honest and has a good sense of humour. Northants or Midlands area. All letters answered. Box No. 954

MALAYSIAN INDIAN WOMAN, 40. I am paraplegic and work at a training centre for disabled children. I would like to share my problems and learn new ideas with other disabled pen-pals. Box No. 955

MALE, AGE 55, single, disabled with cp, slightly affected in all limbs. I like my home life, a quiet life, sometimes visiting places of interest including the countryside and seaside. I dislike pubs, restaurants and loud music. Hoping to meet a kind, caring, understanding lady, for friendship, romance and possibly a lasting relationship or am I asking too much? Box No. 956

LISTEN, I AM 28, a disabled guy, not much hope, but crazy to get married even for a short time. Are you crazy enough to take up my offer? I don't mind if you are disabled or not as I don't mind the life. Box No. 957

OPEN-MINDED CARING trainee profession disabled male seeks similar female for fun and frolics. Personality counts first. All letters answered. Varied interests. Box No. 958

EAST ANGLIAN LADY, 53. Looking to meet a male who enjoys life. Hobbies are Country and Western and driving. I am a wheelchair user. Photo if possible, all letters answered. Box No. 959

25-YR-OLD SINGLE LADY with cp and deaf, looking for friendship, maybe relationship. Wants fun, caring and active person. I have plenty of interests and like socialising. Box No. 960

CORNISHMAN, 46, wheelchair user, seeks friendship with woman who enjoys adventurous life. Prefer Cornwall or Devon but will write anywhere. A whole variety of interests. Box No. 961

VACANCY NOT FILLED – working co-operatively with 36-year-old male, casually smart, well educated professional, lacking the feminine touch. Interests include walking, theatre, art, food and wine. If you think you have what it takes and can meet the challenge, write now. Box No. 962

FUN-LOVING, PRACTICAL, determined Capricorn lady, mid-twenties, wheelchair user. Seeks man who is caring and likes to have a good laugh. Please write with interesting letter. 963

FRIENDSHIP NEEDED. Ladies and gentlemen, this graduate gentleman would like to acquire friendship of a lady especially and would help any gentleman educationally. Have got many interests and am desperate for company in East London. Can travel. Disability no object. Box No. 964

LADY, AGE 43 with cp and I am partially deaf. I would like to meet/respond with a genuine gentleman with similar disabilities. Must have a car please. I am a very lonely lady. I will write anywhere but would be helpful to be near Salisbury. Box No. 965

KIMULI PAUL, living in Kampala, Uganda, looking for sponsors/penpals all over the world. All letters will be replied. Box No. 966

ATTRACTIVE FRIENDLY BLACK man, 33, wants to meet kind, friendly, cuddly, nice, attractive woman with good sense of

humour who will keep me company. Box No. 967

25-YEAR-OLD MALE. Good looking, rehabbing from road accident. Learning to walk and improve speech. Loves travel, sport etc. Looking for relationship, love and fun ie. female companion. Photos please. Write soon! Box No. 968

MAN, 40, CP, French. Graduate in Public Law. Independent, searching for English girl 20/30 for pen friendship and wedding. Box No. 969

SEARCHING FOR MISS RIGHT. Romantic, intelligent, caring, reliable, honest, slightly disabled male, 30s, seeks female 27-37, any nationality for lasting friendship/relationship. Please drop me a line. Box No. 970

YOUNG CHRISTIAN DISABLED woman. Loves God, people, animals, laughter and life in general. Seeks male disabled pen-friends, open to possibility of a relationship, who share her faith and commitment to Christ. Box No. 971

WHEELCHAIR USING DAWN French look-alike, 40. Seeks man for weekend liaisons. Interests film, theatre, food and travel. London based. Box No. 972

ATTRACTIVE MALE, 40, polio-disabled but very independent and active. Seeks female for friendship, possible relationship. I enjoy travel, eating out, cinema, music and much more. Photo (returned) will be appreciated. Box No. 973

CHRISTMAS, I DON'T RELISH another one on my own. Wheelchair user, age 27, honest, sincere, quite handsome, passionate, outgoing and active with good sense of humour, seeks females for friendship, possibly more, age 18-30. All letters answered. Box No. 974

THIRTY-YEAR-OLD ANGLOPHILE male is looking for a female penfriend in Great Britain in her mid twenties-early thirties, preferably paraplegic, for across the Channel correspondence, long-term friendship and possible meeting up. Curiosity for France and good sense of humour most appreciated. Box No. 975

FEMALE, 30, SINGLE, lives in Cheshire. Due to a past leg injury I cannot walk long distances. Would like to meet male 30-40 who is caring, sincere and reliable, for friendship with view to a relationship. Enjoys days/evenings out. Box No. 976

BLACK FEMALE, EARLY 30S, would like to hear from disabled black males aged 34-42, London area for friendship/letters etc. I have many interests. I am not disabled. Box No. 977

GENTLEMAN, 60, MEDIUM build, 5ft 10in, slightly disabled (heart condition), would like to meet a nice lady to take on outings. Age not important but lady must be living in Cambridgeshire area and have a kind sincere heart for lasting relationship. Photo appreciated, all letters answered. 978

MUM, 33, TETRAPLEGIC. Daughter 13 months. Living in Bedfordshire. Seeks funny, loving, strong, hard-working man, paras, able-bodied or in between for honest loving relationship. Box No. 979

MALE 43, WITH spastic paraplegia seeks penpals – male or female. I have a good sense of humour, enjoy working with computers, driving my car, reading and socialising. All replies will be answered. Box No. 980

YOUNG LADY, LONDON. I am happy, shy, fun-loving, warm-hearted, caring, romantic, with brown hair, hazel eyes and I wear glasses. My interests are dining out, theatres, parks, gardens, countryside, radio and television and a lot more. Social drinker, non-smoker. I am seeking male friends, 50 to 65-years-old. Box No. 981

DISABLED MALE, LIKES going out to discos, pubs, clubs etc. Would like a relationship with a girl aged between 18 and 26. I am 25 and have my own self-con-

tained flat which has staff supporting me if needed. Box No. 982

SOUTH-EAST LONDON, male, 39, non-smoker and non-drinker, slightly disabled (chronic back pain) seeks younger girl-friend, same or similar area. Box No. 983

RUSSIAN WOMAN, 29, with cp, looking for male penfriends with cp. Interests include music, books, art, museums and animals. Box No. 984

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BEDFORD RASCAL MINIBUS. G reg. KC mobility conversion Four-seater. Full service history. Dual side doors. Radio T8T. Very good condition. £2,250. Tel: (01709) 543641 (Rotherham).

RIFTON MOBILE PRONE STANDER K16 model. For a child 119cm to 152cm tall. Never used. Sale price £500. Tel: 0191-489 4336.

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NISSAN PRAIRIE AUTOMATIC. Converted for wheelchair. Swivel passenger seat, sunroof and electric windows. D reg. 29,000 miles. Cassette player. Excellent condition. £7,500, cost of conversion. Tel: (01753) 888396.

ELECTRIC WHEELCHAIR Meyra Power Primus. Unused. Cost £2,700, accept £1,350. Tel: (01926) 613198 (Warwickshire).

MEYRA ELAN OUTDOOR wheelchair. Black. Hardly used. £5,000+ new. Asking £1,700. Vessa Nitesse MK3 Electric wheelchair – £750. Toyota Canary Est auto 1988, Bekker controls, A/C, ABS, sunroof, cruise control and towbar – £2,950. Tel: (01630) 655825 (Shropshire).

SHOPRIDER DELUXE four wheel scooter. Bargain at £1,650. Brand new, used only three times. Tel: (01623) 650023 (Mansfield).

ELAP ROTATING CAR seat used in Cortina. Interbility manual ramp used in Caravelle. Buyer must collect. £60 each. Tel: (01473) 657017 (Ipswich).

For sale

Recent bereavement forces sale. As new. £150 ono. Tel: 0191-386 7172.

CONSTABLE CARCHAIR SYSTEM with extras. Attendant model complete with electrics and lifting gear. Very good condition, must sell. £875. Tel: (01939) 232157 (Shropshire).

AUSTIN MINI CLUBMAN auto. Rear access wheelchair. T reg. MOT Feb '97. £500 ono. Tel: (01268) 757561.

BEKKER PUSH PULL HAND CONTROLS for automatic transit. Two sets. Offers tel (work): (01246) 206301, (home): (01246) 452032.

CHILD MOINLYCKE WHEELCHAIR. Suit up to eight years old. Blue. Very good condition. £150. Tel: (01734) 341861.

NISSAN BLUEBIRD 18GS. Automatic electric windows etc. G reg. Low mileage. Autochair wheelchair hoist (will sell separately). £4,500 ono. Tel: (01752) 564040 (Devon).

MOBILITY VEHICLE. Vessa Trecker. Three years old. Very good condition. Sturdy, 20 mile radius. Henley area. Tel: (0385) 734234.

SUNRISE MICRO 3 mobility scooter. New, unused, garaged. Cost £2,300, sell £1,600 ono. Tel: 0181-471-2751.

ELAP ROTATING SLIDING car seat. One black – £200. One grey check – £250. Both nearly new. Tel: (01608) 643292 (Chipping Norton).

ESCORT CHAIRMAN 85C. 33,000 miles. MOT June '97. Six months tax. £1,800 ono. Tel: (01264) 720350 (Hampshire).

WESSEX THROUGH FLOOR lift. Suitable for wheelchair. Cost £5,000 new, will accept £1,500. Buyer arranges for Wessex to dismantle and remove. Regular service. Good condition. Tel: (01264) 356238 evenings (Hampshire).

FORD CHAIRMAN, Nissan Prairie, or similar type vehicle to transport person in wheelchair. Tel: 0181-953 1238.

vw CARAVELLE 1989. Very good condition. Underfloor ramp, clamps and straps. MOT Nov. Low mileage. Full service record. Option of eight seats or wheelchair plus five. £6,950. Tel: (01256) 770454 (Hampshire).

B REG ESCORT Chairman. Lowered floor. 44,000 miles. MOT Jan '97. Good runner. £2,250 ono. Tel: (01562) 700169 (Kidderminster).

NISSAN VANETTE VERSA L reg 1994. Very low mileage – 11,500. Adapted for one or two wheelchair passengers and up to five other passengers. Stereo alarm still under warranty. £6,500 only. Tel: (01274) 676647 after 8pm (Yorkshire).

MOBILITY INTERNATIONAL Gold Metro 1300 HLE High-top. Wheelchair ramp. High windows. 49,000 miles. Full MOT. Exceptional condition. £1,795 ono. Tel: 0114-288 5616/0114-288 3772.

LIBERTY 2 POWERCHAIR. Hardly used. £1,000. Tel: (01344) 20846 (Ascot).

SAFARI ELECTRIC CAR. One owner. Excellent condition. Red detachable top. Cost new, £4,500, sell £1,600. Tel: (01934) 419990 (North Somerset).

CAR SWIVEL SEAT, suitable for most small cars (two door), in use less than 12 months. Comprises base fixing swivel base 180° and seat. Little used and in very good condition. Cost over £700. Will accept £250 for quick sale. Tel: (01424) 212769 (Sussex).

ELAP ROTATING CAR seat used in Cortina. Interbility manual ramp used in Caravelle. Buyer must collect. £60 each. Tel: (01473) 657017 (Ipswich).

Holidays

Britannia Cottage to let. Fully adapted for wheelchair use. Good access to beaches. Sleeps up to 6. Details **C. Hodgson**. Tel: (01924) 454300.

ASHWELL THORPE HALL HOTEL provides good access, specialist equipment in some rooms. All in a comfortable, friendly country house hotel set in several acres of natural grounds, nine miles from the ancient city of Norwich, offering excellent opportunities for exploring the countryside and coastline of East Anglia. Book now for Autumn and Winter Breaks, Christmases and New Year. Ring 01508 489324

DORDOGNE COTTAGE TO LET Wheelchair accessible, sleeps 8 with ground floor suite for disabled. Fully equipped plus pool. Details: **Jan Pyke**. Telephone 0033.53.82.42.05

Blagdon Farm Country Holidays Devon/Cornwall border Superb, south-facing, wheelchair accessible luxury bungalows overlooking lake and set within 38 acres of country countryside. Many on-site facilities including tea room/shop. Takeaway meals and equipment hire available. Tourist Board Highly Commended. For colour brochure please contact: **Pauline and Tony Blight, Blagdon Farm, Ashwater, Beaworthy, Devon EX21 5DF. Phone: 01409 211509. Fax: 01409 211510**

Bonneuil Holiday Cottages - An Investment Opportunity - Own an idyllic home designed for people with disabilities. Situated in rural South West France, Bonneuil Holiday Cottages is a unique UK owned farmstead development project - including 6 holiday cottages, covered swimming pool, tennis courts, landscaped gardens, river fishing and holiday letting and maintenance service. Prices range from £28,000 per cottage. For further details contact: **Bonneuil Holiday Cottages, 53 Woodville Road, Mumbles, Swansea SA3 4AE**

Holidays by the Sea
Rosetta Nursing Care and Rehabilitation Centre is able to provide disabled people with holidays in Worthing, as independently as possible. Level access to the shops and seafront. Transport arranged from Worthing Rail Station.

For a copy of our short breaks brochure, please contact:
Mrs Anne Colls, Matron Rosetta Nursing & Rehabilitation Centre 32-36 St Michaels Road Worthing, West Sussex BN11 4RY Tel: 01903 820561

CAIRNGORMS - STRATHSPEY, SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS Beautifully restored 19th century forest village cottage offers (STB) highly accredited facilities, especially designed for wheelchair users. Spacious, warm and peaceful. Central for touring Cairngorms, Loch Ness, Moray Firth. Brochure with specifications and access guide to numerous local attractions and visits. Tel/Fax: 01479 821642


Glebe Farm Holidays
Glebe Farm, Charles, Brayford, Nr. Barnstaple, North Devon EX32 7PT
Tel: 01598 710241
Fax: 01598 710813
Email: Boddington@easynet.co.uk
Self-catering holiday cottages sleeping 2-6 people. Fully wheelchair accessible. Out of season breaks. Please ring for our brochure.

Llanleilo, West Wales 1994 HOLIDAY CARE WINNER 3 cottages, all wheelchair accessible. Rural location and overlooked by 12th century castle. Ideally situated for exploring South and West Wales. Each cottage sleeps 4, central heating, CTV, games/fitness rooms, laundry, extensive grounds. Open all year, short breaks available. Tel: Catherine McLoughlin (01558) 823059 for brochure

Christmas in France at Auberge De La Tour

Spend a traditional Christmas in a small family-run guest house in Loire/Vendee region. Transportation costs from ferry/airport and excursions inclusive.

For further details contact:
Mr & Mrs Bartlam, 40 Rue St Eloi, Courlay, 79440 Deux Sevres, France.
Tel (00.33) 49.72.25.37
English contact no.
01395 267084.

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Call 0345 90 90 90
(local call rate)

Textphone: 01753 532715

for your nearest textphone branch

Visit or write to your local Branch

E-mail: jo@samaritans.org or anonymously:
samaritans@anon.penel.fi

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please call your local Branch (number in the phone book)

POLIO

Groups or individuals interested in joining a national post-polio clinic action group, please write to:

Box No. DN37
Kingslea Press Ltd, 12 Dock Offices, Surrey Quays Road London SE16 2XU

TO ADVERTISE YOUR VACANCIES/COURSES
Please contact the Advertisement Director,
Richard Gresham, Kingslea Press Ltd,
12 Dock Offices, Surrey Quays Road,
London SE16 2XU.
Tel: 0171-252 1362 Fax: 0171-237 8019.

Recruitment

FREELANCE TRAINERS IN DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

Direct Training, Remploy's Training Consultancy, is seeking to expand its approved list of freelance consultants and trainers. We are looking for people who have a strong commitment to the employment and integration of disabled people in the work place and who can work positively and creatively with a diverse workforce.

The areas in which we require services are:

- disability awareness
- recruitment and selection of disabled people
- management of disabled people
- equality of opportunity and integration of disabled people
- the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- training and development of disabled people in the work place

Applicants must:

- be highly proactive
- have proven ability in the delivery of training
- be prepared to travel
- support our core principles
- demonstrate commitment and the ability to help us achieve our strategic objectives

Full and current CV should be sent to:

Elaine Leedham, Remploy Ltd Direct Training
Tixall Lodge Stables, Tixall, Staffs ST18 0YR

Closing date for applications is Friday 20th September and interviews will take place between October and December 1996.

Conferences

Royal National Institute for the Blind

Accessing communications networks and technology

Two essential conferences for your diaries

Universal Service for Disabled People
Wednesday 18 September 1996, 10.00am

- explores the development of communication networks for people with disabilities
- aims to set out the basis for a Disabled Consumers Charter for telecommunication services

Both events take place at RIBA, 66 Portland Place, London W1
The venue is accessible to wheelchairs and welcomes guide dogs.

To find out more, or to book, call Dr John Gill on

0171 388 1266

Access Seminar

Wednesday 2 October 1996, 10.30am

- looks at recent developments in the design of computer technology
- explores accessibility of new technology for people with disabilities
- includes demonstrations of new systems



RNIB
challenging blindness

Charity Registration No 226227

GAER COTTAGES

"1993 HOLIDAY CARE AWARD WINNERS"
Quality self-catering cottages for ALL the family with an emphasis on facilities for disabled visitors. 6 of the 9 traditional Welsh stone cottages are single storey, easily accessible from the car park. WTB Top Grading 5 Dragons. Luxurious indoor heated swimming pool with hoist. Games room. Open ALL YEAR. Groups welcome. For colour brochure telephone:

RICHARD & LINDA BURGESS
01570 470275

PENROSE BURDEN NORTH CORNWALL

"1992 Holiday Care Award Winners"
Holiday Cottages designed for wheelchair users and their families. Rural setting with superb views. Dogs welcome. Wood burning stoves and daily meal service.
Please ring or write for colour brochure.
R&N Hall, Penrose Burden, St Beward, Bodmin, Cornwall PL30 4LZ. Telephone Bodmin (01208) 850277 or 850617.

Yorkshire Dales

Well appointed en-suite accommodation including specially adapted for disabled/elderly guests. Peaceful situation. Imaginative cuisine. Special diets welcome. 3 crowns deluxe. Disabled access Grade 1. Category 1 accommodation. Likely to meet the needs of all wheelchair users, including those travelling independently. High Fold, Kettlewell BD23 5RJ. Telephone 01756 760390.

NORFOLK BROADS/COAST

— The Old Chapel, Horsey Corner. ETB Commended, BB/EM in Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Rural National Trust village. Non smoking. Category 3 accommodation. Special autumn packages.

Tel: 01493 393498 for Brochure

RNIB CENTURY HOTEL
caters for visually impaired guests, their families & guides. From £13 per day BB & EM. Phone (01253) 354598. 406 North Promenade, Blackpool.

ORLANDO, FLORIDA

DISABLED TRAVELLERS DON'T MISS THIS SPACIOUS, LUXURY ADAPTED BUNGALOW. 3 DOUBLE BEDROOMS, 2 BATHROOMS (MANGAR BATHLIFT), CABLE TV, TELEPHONE, COUNTRY CLUB MEMBERSHIP, 10 MINS. AIRPORT, 15 MINS. DISNEY. PARAPLEGIC OWNER, SUE FISHER, 5 PARK LANE, BROUGHTON PARK, SALFORD M7 4HT TEL/FAX: 0161 792 3029

North Norfolk

Character cottage. Sleeps 8 + cot. Luxury single en-suite ground floor bedroom for wheelchair user with electrically operated bed, wheelchair shower, toilet with rail and remote control colour TV, 3 further bedrooms, 2 lounges, 2 bathrooms. No pets/smokers. Tel: (01205) 367111.

Holidays

CARBIS BAY,
CORNWALL

2 bed Bungalows, easily accessible. Sept/Oct from £125, self catering. Telephone Robert or Linda 01736 798675

Greatly Reduced Rates for our Award Winning Self Catering for the Disabled Accommodation. From September until May 1997.

Ramsey, Isle of Man

* Access * Wheel in Shower/WC Unit en suite * Adapted kitchen.

Small flat 4 star for 3 to 4

Town House 5 star for 6

* Bath hoist * Electric bed

Telephone

Margaret (01624) 812729

Margery (01624) 815956

NAISH ESTATE, New Milton, Hampshire. Fully equipped, completely wheelchair accessible, two-bedroom bungalow. Sleeps six. Site near sea with access to New Forest, Bournemouth. Excellent site facilities 100 yards from Chalet. Details, Mr P. Cash, tel: (01425) 672055.

LOOE, CORNWALL. Fully equipped, self-catering, two-bedroom bungalow. Sleeps six. Site near sea with easy access to beach, shop and camp facilities. Easy accessible for wheelchairs. Details, Mr P. Cash, tel: (01425) 672055.

Wanted

FLOOR LIFT for wheelchair user. Tel: (24hr answerphone) 0181 748-2095.

BROTHERWOOD PRAIRIE MK1 ORII, low mileage. Tel: (01932) 229636 (Surrey).

ELECTRIC SHOPPING SCOOTER. Must be reliable and in good condition. Tel (work): (01253) 792992, (home): (01253) 342666.

SECOND HAND in good condition: Powertec F16 electric chair. Tel: (01494) 681739.

Help wanted

SEVERELY DEAF WOMAN needs help with phone calls and meetings. Four hours a week. Pay negotiable. North East Hampshire. Write to: Meetings Help, DN, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.

Position wanted

FULLY QUALIFIED CARER seeks permanent position with a disabled person in South West London. Hours/pay negotiable. References held. Please call 0181-287 1189 (answerphone).

A WELL-EDUCATED, TRAINED and experienced carer seeks live-in caring anywhere in Britain. Worked for well-known agencies. Please phone or write to Fred Adebayo, 77 Edgehill Place, Coventry CV4 9UE, tel: (01203) 422677.

Property to let

SEMI DETACHED BUNGALOW built for person with wheelchair disability. Fully furnished. Nine years old. To let: £400 per calendar month. Tel: (01484) 854104 (Huddersfield).

Deadlines for
October issue:
booking by
13 September,
camera ready
artwork/copy by
17 September

Recruitment

Change the world from your own front room!

Assessors

International Grants Programme

The Board recognises the excellent international work of UK-based NGOs and has announced a new grants programme to help them develop their existing work and enable them to set up new and innovative projects.

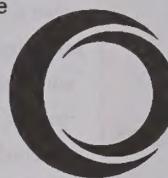
We need a range of individuals from across the UK to examine and assess applications for their suitability for funding. All assessment will be conducted in the UK (no overseas travel) and may involve a visit to the applicant. You must be able to commit yourself to at least 12 hours per week, on a freelance basis at £12 per hour, during the assessment period (Jan-Mar 1997).

To help ensure we channel funds to the most appropriate applicants we seek people with a sound grasp of overseas developmental work and experience of project planning and

freelance £12ph - UK wide

implementation gained in at least one of the following areas: Africa, Asia, South & Central America, the Caribbean and Central and Eastern Europe.

We are looking for sound judgement, good analytical and investigative skills and an ability to work to tight deadlines. An understanding of equal opportunities issues relating to assessment is essential.



NATIONAL
LOTTERY
CHARITIES
BOARD

For further details and application form please contact the Personnel Department, National Lottery Charities Board, St Vincent House, Orange Street, London WC2H 7HH. Tel: 0171 747 5219/5303 (24 hour answerphone), or 0171 747 5237 during office hours.

Please quote reference: 090/DN.

Closing date: 20th September 1996.

Positively committed to equal opportunity

BRITISH MUSEUM

Access Co-ordinator

A vacancy exists for an Access Co-ordinator in the Education Service for a fixed-term appointment of three years. This post is made possible by a grant from the TSB Foundations.

The successful candidate will be responsible for all aspects of disability provision, programmes and resources for the Museum. The main duties include: initiating and co-ordinating events and teaching programmes; developing and expanding services for children and adults with physical, sensory and learning difficulties; co-ordinating access audits; and liaising with relevant departments within the Museum, and outside the Museum with specialist organisations and the media.

Applicants must have: substantial experience of educational provision for disabled children and adults; familiarity with current legislation on disability access and education for special needs; proven public relations skills; and a first degree. Experience of working in museums is highly desirable.

The post is graded as Band 5 and the salary will be in the region of £18,000.00, depending on qualifications and experience. Applications are particularly welcome from people with a disability.

For further information and an application form (to be returned by 30 September 1996) please write, enclosing an A4 sae to Personnel Services I (Ref 9/96), British Museum, Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DG.

The British Museum is working towards becoming an equal opportunities employer.



REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR LONDON

£15,744-£17,538 inc London Weighting.

Initial Two Year Contract.

This new post is part of our commitment to delivering services locally to families with deaf children. You will provide information and support to families in London, develop a network of local self-help groups and research provision of services to deaf children in London.

You must have experience of providing information and support to members of the public, assisting people in the area of special educational needs to the level of tribunal representation, community development, project/research development and working with a multi-ethnic community. Ideally, you should also be familiar with welfare rights work. You must have excellent all round communication skills.

Your knowledge should include recent education legislation/guidance, Disability Living Allowance and the issues facing deaf children and their families.

For further details, please send an A4 SAE (49p) to the Personnel Department, NDCS, 15 Dufferin Street, London EC1Y 8PD.

Closing date for applications: 20th September 1996.

Interviews will be held in the week of 30th September.

The Society is aiming to be an Equal Opportunities Employer.

Charity Registration Number: 1016532

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Os am fanylion pellach cysylltwch â:

Cadeirydd yr Ymddiriedolwyr, Ymddiriedolaeth EHLLA, 2 Glanrafon, Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 1LH

neu ffoniwch: 01248 352 227

Dyddiad cau am geisiadau: Medi 20, 1996

(This is a vacancy for Fundraising/Development Worker in North Wales, for which post knowledge of Welsh is essential.)



NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL WORK

SHAPING OUR LIVES - PROJECT WORKER P/T

Salary £20,677 pro rata (under review)

We are looking for a half time project worker, for two years, to help us develop an understanding of how service users and their organisations are defining and working towards the outcomes they want for themselves.

The successful candidate will have personal experience of using community care services, the ability to undertake participatory and emancipatory research, and good administrative, written and oral communication skills. The person appointed may work from home or a local base, and will have the support of an active project management team the majority of whom will be disabled people/service users.

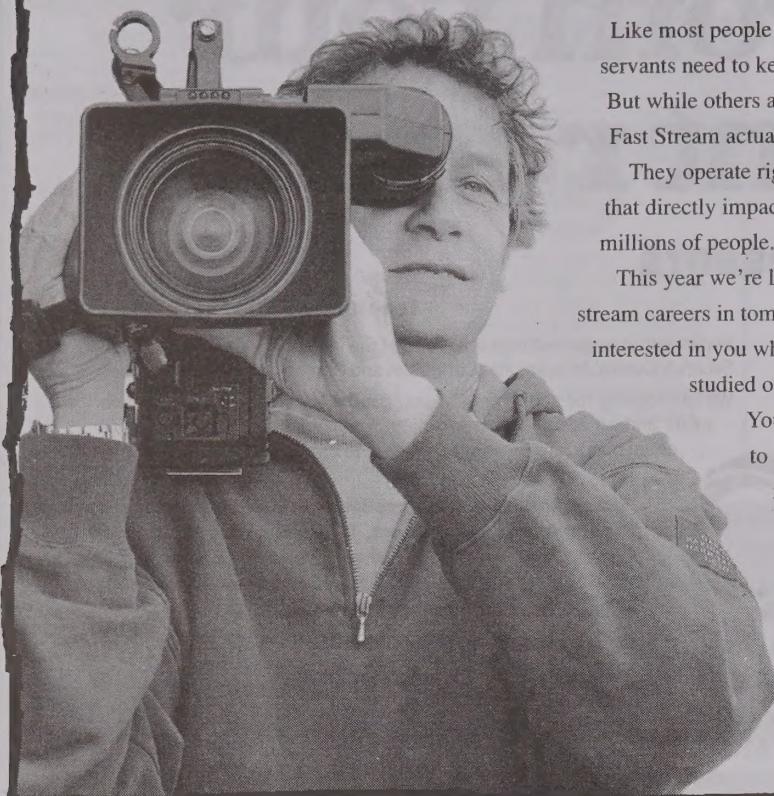
Closing date for completed applications: 16 September. For details and an application form, send a large A4 self addressed envelope with 39p stamps, to Juliet Gardner (ref PW), National Institute for Social Work, 5 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9SN. No CVs. Interviews in London on 27 September.

The Institute is working towards equal opportunities.

We welcome applications from people with disabilities.

Raising standards in social work and social care

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Like most people in positions of real responsibility, fast stream civil servants need to keep bang up to date with national and international news. But while others are content simply to watch and absorb it, those in the Fast Stream actually help make it.

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To find out more about the Fast Stream Development Programme, visit our Internet site at <http://www.open.gov.uk/co/fsaesd/fsaesd.htm>. For our latest brochure and application form, simply write to **Recruitment & Assessment Services**, Alencon Link, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 7JB, telephone 01256 468551 (24 hours) or fax 01256 846303. Please quote reference A115. Applications must be returned by 18 September 1996. In addition, for a pc-based self-assessment program that gives you an idea of whether or not you're cut out for the Fast Stream, please quote PCDISK or access it via our Internet site.

Depending on your qualifications and relevant experience, your salary will be in the range £13,000 - £24,600 with increases related to performance.

The Civil Service is an Equal Opportunity Employer, and is whole-heartedly committed to action plans to improve the recruitment and progress of women, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities.

RAS

Skill

National Bureau
for Students
with Disabilities

Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities

Development Officer

for Skill SCOTLAND Branch

Skill in Scotland is now able to expand its role promoting opportunities in post-compulsory education, training and employment for young people and adults with any sort of disability by appointing a full time Development Officer. This post offers an exciting opportunity to get involved with the development of a voluntary organisation in Scotland.

The Development Officer, working together with branch members, will plan a programme including publications and conferences, liaison with voluntary agencies and education and training providers and disabled students/trainees, establishing an office and providing information and advice in conjunction with Skill's Information Service.

The Development Officer will have excellent communication and management skills. S/he will also have an understanding of disability issues, and education and employment fields in a Scottish context.

It is expected that the office base will be in Stirling.

Skill has an equal opportunities policy. Applications are welcome from all regardless of age, sex, marital status, ethnic origin, race, colour, nationality, sexual preference or disability. A disability will be considered an additional, but not an essential qualification for the post.

Salary (SO1/SO2, points 29-34) £17,055-£19,818.

Full details, including application form, job description, job factsheet and person specification, are available from:

Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities

336 Brixton Road, London SW9 7AA. Tel: 0171 274 0565

Closing date for applications is strictly 20 September 1996. CVs will not be accepted.

Interviews will take place on 1 October in Scotland.

Skill acknowledges funding from The National Lottery Charities Board for this project in Scotland.

Registered charity number 801971



A VOICE FOR RIGHTS

We are looking for a full-time

Independent Living Advocate

(SO1 [29] gross salary including London Weighting £19,266) to come and join a new and exciting project run by Disabled people for Disabled people in Tower Hamlets.

You will need to have a detailed knowledge of Independent Living Opportunities within present legislation and an understanding of the role of advocacy within this process.

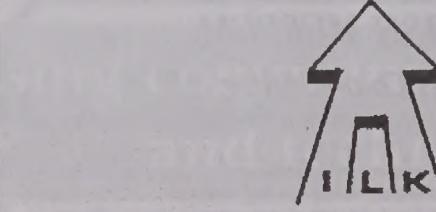
We do not discriminate on any grounds and invite applications from all sections of our community.

Application packs available either from: **0181 981 0337** answer phone

or by writing to **82 Russia Lane, London E2 9LU**.

Closing date for returned applications is 9th October 1996.

Interview dates 15/16 October 1996.



INDEPENDENT LIVING (KEIGHLEY) LTD

"creating opportunities for integration, empowerment and autonomy with people with disabilities"
ILK is a unique and innovative community based Project that promotes the rights of disabled people to determine their own ways of living.

We require on FIXED TERM contracts until March 2001:

a RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT WORKER - 18.75 hours per week.

Main responsibilities: to research and develop options for appropriate personal assistance for people with severe physical impairments.

You will have a proven track record in developing projects, personal experience of disability (PA user preferred) and commitment to equal opportunities issues.

and a COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKER - 18.75 hours per week.

Main responsibilities: to develop a user-led approach to service development and provision within the philosophy of ILK.

You will have an understanding of empowerment in action and a demonstrable awareness of disability and equal opportunities issues. In addition to experience and commitment to working with volunteers, you will be able to work unsocial hours and respond flexibly to unexpected demands.

Relevant qualifications would be helpful but not essential. ILK is an equal opportunities employer.

Salaries: SCP scale 24-26, £14,436-£15,375 PRO RATA.

CLOSING DATE: 19/9/96

INTERVIEWS: 25/9/96

START DATE: 1/10/96



For application pack please telephone 01535 690993

adkc
actively working towards equality

Action Disability Kensington & Chelsea

ADKC, an Organisation of disabled people who live and work in Kensington and Chelsea is looking to establish a pool of

Freelance Counsellors

for their new Counselling Project for disabled people.

ADKC has funding to refer and pay for 10 counselling hours per week.

The Organisation particularly welcomes interest from disabled people.

If you are interested and would like further information please forward your CV to:

ADKC, 19-27 Young Street, London W8 5EH

0171 937 7073 - Voice/Minicom

Office fully-accessible.

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Win an adjustable desk worth £700

Study in style with this height-adjustable desk from Astor-Bannerman, who make a range of furniture suitable for people with disabilities.

This solid, robust desk was designed with the help of the Ormerod School in Oxford.

It comes with two-way or total-lock casters, measures 800mm x 1200mm and has a total carrying capacity of 100kg.

Its height can be adjusted between 600mm and 950mm, so it is suitable for adults and children. Not only can you

adjust it for the right height for wheelchair users and adults with standing frames, but your child can use the same desk as he or she grows older.

The desk comes in a blue, red or green, so you can choose the one to suit your room.

It also features a light operating mechanism (unlike the scissor-style finger trapping ones on cheaper models).

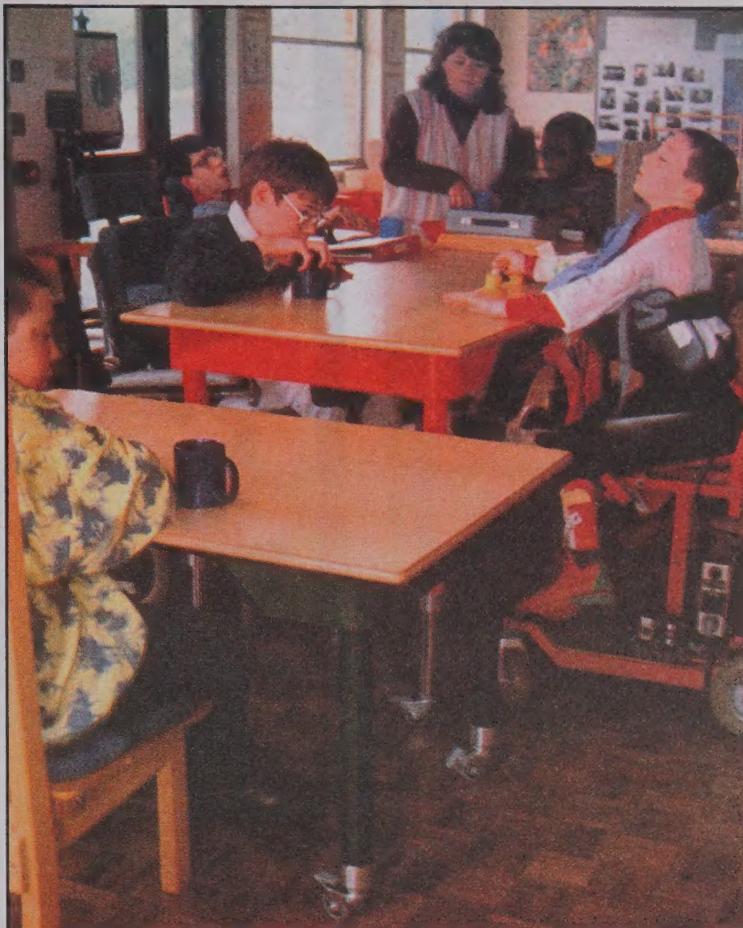
As an activity table, it may be used by two children at once and there is an attachable shelf or swing out telephone stand that can be provided too as part of the offer.

Astor Bannerman produce other ranges of accessible furniture for the home, office or school including kitchen units, shower chairs, child changing tables, slope top tables and trolleys. For more information, tel: (01865) 201621.

To enter, just send a postcard with your name, address and telephone number to Desk Offer, DN, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ. The first name pulled out of a hat will win.

Closing date: 4 October.

All offers not open to DN staff or associates.



ASTOR • BANNERMAN

101 Dalmations gifts

It knocks spots off all Disney's other films and it's just been released on video.

So banish your kids' back-to-school blues with a copy of this timeless cartoon or a 101 Dalmations t-shirt.

We've got one video to give

away to the first name pulled out of a hat. Four runners up will win a t-shirt.

Just send a postcard with your

name and address to:
Dalmations Offer, DN, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.

Closing date: 20 September.



...and win hampers or vouchers kindly donated by Sainsbury in our reader survey. See page 33.

Rucksack and stationery offer

Make waves in the classroom with this colourful rucksack and stationery from WH Smith.

We've got two bags to give away packed with £10 worth of Ocean Wave goodies (right).

Send your name and address on a postcard to: Waves Offer, DN, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ. The first two names pulled out of a hat will win.

Closing date: 20 September.



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What's in DN next month?

■ **Paralympics** Full coverage with photographer Graham Bool and *Daily Telegraph's* Gareth A Davies.

■ **Edinburgh Festival hits 50** Common Ground's latest show, *The Gift, Brimstone and Treacle* and dance from America and Japan.

■ **Motor Show** DN's David Griffiths looks ahead at what's new for motorists.

■ **City Focus: Birmingham** Its baltis are famous, but what else does Brum have to offer? DN finds out.

■ **Personal safety** As the nights draw in it's better to be safe than sorry. So what can you do to cut down the risks?

Plus all the best news, views, arts, sport, jobs and offers.
On sale 27 September.



Disability Now

£1.40 September 1996

The award winning newspaper for everyone with an interest in disability

Travellers triumph

Disabled people fought for their rights this summer against Cunard and Air India – and won. See over.

Marching to victory: the British team step out at the opening ceremony of the 1996 Paralympics in Atlanta. We wish them luck.



BOO/LATCHISON

Back to school giveaways including a desk worth £700

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